

"MA'AM, YES MA'AM:"  
GENDER RELATIONS AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE  
IN THE ROYAL NEWFOUNDLAND REGIMENT

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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“MA'AM, YES MA'AM:”

GENDER RELATIONS AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN  
THE ROYAL NEWFOUNDLAND REGIMENT

by

© Brenda Lee Kitchen

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School of Graduate Studies

in partial fulfilment for the degree of

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Newfoundland

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“We are all soldiers. I don't look at it as men and women. We all have a task to do.”

- Pamela



Abstract

In 1989, Canadian Forces leadership granted authorization for women to enter all trades of the military. This study examines gender integration and the consequences and experiences of women who choose to enter one particular reserve unit: The Royal Newfoundland Regiment (RNR). This is a qualitative analysis of the experiences of nine men and nine women, who are former or current members of this unit. The research takes a grounded theory approach to sociological investigation. This generates concepts and categories that help explain the particular social actions of members of The RNR during the research itself that will be elaborated on later in the thesis. First, I provide a background on the military, specifically the reserve unit, The RNR. A personal experience with the Canadian Forces as a reserve officer in the Cadet Instructors Cadre and my academic curiosity forged the current research and helped develop the research question. This leads to an examination of current literature. Afterwards, the data are introduced. Several themes become prominent and evoke discussion, such as: the terminology of the institution, the military entrance requirements, how menstruation has become a territory of confusion, and the attitudes of the 'old boys' network that continue to linger. Another theme is the manifestation of a distinct type of masculinity, the use of put-downs and the threat of sexual and physical harassment. The discussion then turns to the tools in place for women in the military to deal with this environment. Several recommendations are made to improve training for the reserve unit and for further research.

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My experience during the M.A. has been like no other, a roller coaster of ups and downs. It is here that I have learned to truly read and write. Encouraged in my curiosity and quest for truth, I have continued to grow, not only academically but holistically. Throughout this journey I have met many individuals along the way. I would like to thank them now because without them, this thesis would not be possible.

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List of Military Definitions

Aldershot	A training camp located in Kentville, Nova Scotia. This camp is primarily for army units from the east coast of Canada (Captain Pretty, personal communication, January 13, 2003).
Artillery	One of the basic branches of the army, equipped with large-caliber, long-range weapons (Gaynor, 1951, p. 23).
Bastion	In fortifications, a structure projecting from the main closure of a fortification. It consists of two faces meeting in a salient angle that commands the foreground and out works. It also has two flanks, each able to defend the flanking fire face of the adjacent bastion and the adjacent curtain (the wall joining the flank of one bastion with the adjacent flank of another) (Quick, 1973, p. 50).
Battalion	A body of troops, usually a tactical unit composed of headquarters and two or more companies or batteries (Quick, 1973, p. 50).
Cadet Instructor Cadre	Established in 1871, the primary function of the Cadet Instructors Cadre is the training, administration and supervision of cadets, as stated in section 43 of the National Defence Act
Camaraderie	The spirit of familiarity and good will that exists between comrades. Loyalty to one's associates. Comradeship (Garber, 1942, p. 45).
Canadian Forces (CF)	The mission of the CF is to defend Canada, its interests and its values, while contributing to international peace and security. Under Canadian defence policy, the CF are called upon to fill three major roles: protecting Canada, defending North America in co-operation with the United States of America, and contributing to peace and international security ( <i>Main Roles of the Canadian Forces</i> , 2003).
Casualty	Any person who is lost to the organization by reason of having been declared dead, wounded, injured, diseased, captured, retained, missing in action, beleaguered, besieged or detained (JCS, 1988, p. 62).
Civilian	n. a person not in the armed services or the police force (Pearsall et al., 1999, p. 261).



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Cold Weather Indoctrination Course	A course designed to teach a person how to be a group leader in a cold weather environment (Captain Pretty, personal communication, January 13, 2003).
Combat Forces	Those forces whose primary missions are to participate in combat (JCS, 1988, p. 75).
Combat, Military	A violent, planned form of fighting, in which at least one party is an organized force, recognized by governmental or defacto authority. One or both opposing parties hold at least one of the following objectives: to seize control or territory, or to protect one's own territory. The presence of weaponry creates an atmosphere of lethality, danger, and fear in which one's party's achievement of objectives may require its opponent to choose among: continued resistance [and thereby risk destruction], retreat and loss of territories and facilities or surrender (Dupuy, 1986, p. 52).
Combat, Service Support	The support provided to combat forces, primarily in fields of administration and logistics (JCS, 1988, p. 75).
Commanding Officer (CO)	An officer who commands a unit or installation (Dupuy, 1986, p. 55).
Commission	(n) 1). A written certificate giving a person rank and authority as an officer in the armed forces. 2). The rank and authority given by such an order (Dupuy, 1986, p. 55).
Comrade	n. (among men) a companion who shares one's activities or is a fellow member of an organization. (Also <i>comrade in arms</i> ) a fellow soldier or serviceman (Pearsall et al., 1999, p. 294).
Cot	A camp bed (Pearsall et al., 1999, p. 323).
Department of National Defense (DOD)	In the United States, the federal department responsible for safeguarding national security; created in 1947 ( <i>On-Line Military Dictionary</i> , 2003).

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Department of National Defence (DND)	One of the Canadian national institutions that come solely under the federal government, which is the only authority in matters of defence and protection of Canadian sovereignty (Captain Pretty, Personal communication, January 13, 2003).
Drill Sergeant	A sergeant responsible for drilling troops (Dupuy, 1986, p. 77).
Enlisted Personnel	Those in the lower ranks of the armed services who do not hold rank by either commission or warrant. Includes privates, corporals, and sergeants, and equivalent ranks in other services (Dupuy, 1986, p. 86).
Esprit De Corps	A feeling of pride in a unit and of pervasive enthusiasm and confidence among its members (Dupuy, 1986, p. 84).
Ground Sheet	A waterproof sheet spread on the ground inside a tent (Pearsall et al., 1999, p. 628).
Hoochie	A temporary shelter (Captain Pretty, personal communication, January 13, 2003).
Infantryman	An infantry soldier (Quick, 1973, p. 236).
Infantry	A branch of the army in which soldiers are organized, trained, and equipped to fight on foot (Dupuy, 1986, p. 120).
Kit	The personal belongings of a soldier (Dupuy, 1986, p. 130).
Lean-to	A temporary shelter (Captain Pretty, personal communication, January 13, 2003).
Load Control Group	Personnel who are concerned with organization and control of loading within the pick-up zone (JCS, 1988, p. 208).
Major	A rank in most armies and in the US Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps, above Captain and below Lieutenant Colonel (Dupuy, 1986, p. 142).
MEDEVAC Aircraft	Medical Evacuation Aircraft (Captain Pretty, personal communication, January 13, 2003).

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Military Occupation Code (MOC)	The specific trade that one is engaged in, identified by a number. Example, infantry is 031, medic is 411 (Captain Pretty, personal communication, January 13, 2003).
Military	Pertaining to armed services of all branches - army, navy, marine corps, air force. Often used to refer only to the army, particularly in contradistinction to "naval" (Dupuy, 1986, p. 159).
Noncommissioned Officers (NCO)	An enlisted member of the armed forces who holds a rank or rating in which he exercises authority by appointment rather than by commission or warrant (Dupuy, 1986, p. 159).
Noncombatant	Not normally engaged in or assigned to combat duty (Dupuy, 1986, p. 159).
Officers' Mess	An establishment, place of social gathering for meals, also bar is present. There is also a NCO Mess (Captain Pretty, personal communication, January 13, 2003).
Platoon	The next to the smallest unit in a modern military organization. Composed of 25 to 50 men and usually divided into squads or sections, platoons are the smallest unit commanded by a commissioned officer (second lieutenant or ensign), although they are often commanded by noncommissioned officers. From two to four platoons form a company (Dupuy, 1986, p. 173).
Prisoner of War (POW)	In accordance with the Geneva Convention of 1949, such a prisoner is anyone who falls into the hands of the enemy in time of war and who is a member of an armed force or of certain civilian categories as established by the convention. Prisoners of war of nations signatory to the 1949 convention are subject to the disciplines and guaranteed the rights and privileges that are set fourth in the articles of the Convention (Dupuy, 1986, p. 176).
QL2	Qualification Level 2, Basic Recruit Training (Captain Pretty, personal communication, January 13, 2003).
QL3	Qualification Level 3, Basic Trade Theory (Captain Pretty, personal communication, January 13, 2003).

Rank	(n). 1. The status of a person as determined by the grade to which he belongs. 2. The relative status of a person within a grade. 3. The grade to which a person belongs. 4. A line of persons, side by side. 5. Pl. As in "in the ranks": in military service, especially as an enlisted person. (V). To be senior in rank to (Dupuy, 1986, p. 183).
Recruit	An enlisted person newly entered in military or naval service (Quick, 1973, p. 369).
Regular Force	(Regular Army) The standing army of a state; regular troops, as opposed to militia or volunteers (Quick, 1973, p. 371).
Reserve Force	1. A force or forces kept out of action until needed for some contingency. 2. An accumulation of supplies or equipment in excess of immediate needs. 3. The military or naval forces of a nation in addition to the regular forces or other forces on active duty (Quick, 1973, p. 373).
Rifleman	A soldier armed with a rifle. Formally, a special kind of light infantry consisting of superior marksmen armed with the improved rifles (Quick, 1973, p. 373).
RMS	Resource Management Systems. Includes those in administrative and finance positions (Captain Pretty, personal communication, January 13, 2003).
Royal Newfoundland Regiment, The	A reserve infantry unit, only reserve unit in Newfoundland with a band attached (Captain Pretty, personal communication, January 13, 2003).
Ruck, or rucksack	A bag with two shoulder straps which allow it to be carried on the back, used by hikers (Pearsall et al., 1999, p. 1250).
Second in Command (2IC)	An officer whose rank and responsibilities are next in importance to those of a commanding officer, whose duties he performs in his absence (Dupuy, 1986, p. 194).

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Section	A tactical unit of the Army and Marine Corps. A section is smaller than a platoon and larger than a squad, and in some organizations, the section, rather than the squad, is the basic tactical unit (Dupuy, 1986, p. 195).
Sergeant	The highest noncommissioned officer (Quick, 1973, p. 393).
Serviceman	A person in the armed services (Dupuy, 1986, p. 197).
Soldier	1. In a general sense, any person in an army or ground combat force. 2. An enlisted person in the army, as distinguished from a officer (Dupuy, 1986, p. 263).
Tear Gas	Chemical irritants that inflame the mucous membranes of the eyes and cause tears. Used as toxic agents in World War II, tear gas is now mainly used as a simulated toxic agent for combat training purposes and in instances of civil disorder, usually to disperse crowds (Dupuy, 1986, p. 215).
Troops	1. Soldier or military personnel of any service (but usually not applied to naval personnel afloat (JCS, 1988, p. 380).
Unit	1. Any military element whose structure is prescribed by competent authority, such as a table or organization and equipment; specifically, part of an organization. 2. An organization title of a subdivision of a group in a task force (JCS, 1988, p. 380).
Warrant Officer	An officer ranking between noncommissioned officers and commissioned officers by virtue of a warrant (Dupuy, 1986, p. 228).

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GENDER RELATIONS AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN  
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Chapter 1: Introduction

*Introduction*

Role expectations regarding the proper behaviour, attitudes, and activities of men and women persist, and manifest themselves in ideas of motherhood, fatherhood, and paid and unpaid labour. Although the situation is improving, women's work outside the home continues to be largely in low-status trades that reflect women's training as care-givers and homemakers. Further, the largest number of employed women continue to hold positions in the clerical field, while other “typical” female occupations include teaching, nursing, and social work (Anderson, 1993, p. 115). As women attempt to leave the traditional occupations and enter the non-traditional, they challenge societal assumptions of the categorization of men's and women's labour. These women evoke mixed reactions. Gender stereotyping has social consequences for women and their performance in certain types of work.

The Department of National Defence (DND) wants women to feel welcome, but what exactly does this mean? Women have been involved in Canada's military service for a long time. Although their employment is still restricted, women's roles expanded in 1971 after DND reviewed the recommendations made by the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. DND continued to review personnel policies and, in 1987, created an

office to study the impact of employing women in combat units. Trials entitled Combat-Related Employment of Women (CREW) were implemented to study the impact of women in combat units. In 1989, CREW trials were called to a halt and all restrictions lifted (with the exception of the submarine service) with the goal of fully integrating women by 1999. In 1990, there was an external advisory board created called the Minister's Advisory Board on Gender Integration (MABGICF), mandated to monitor integration progress. Initiatives were put in place to create awareness of gender issues and eliminate discriminatory practices and attitudes. These initiatives included the Canadian Forces Recruiting Education and Training System, which has an enhanced recruiting campaign to attract women into the combat arms. There has also been an increased awareness that new equipment must be made suitable for a mixed-gender force. Logistics, more specifically clothing stores, have revisited their stock and have since designed, and are issuing, maternity combats among other changes. In addition, gender awareness and diversity training has been implemented. A harassment sensitization course, Standard for Harassment and Racism Prevention (SHARP), is mandatory for every member<sup>1</sup>. While these initiatives have been implemented, doubts continue to linger. It is questionable if the military can successfully make genuine efforts to welcome women. This is an

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<sup>1</sup>

Throughout this report harassment refers to “discrimination based on a ground such as race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability or conviction for which a pardon has been granted” (Adams-Roy, 1999, p. 9).

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institution that has a pervasive male ideology, deeply-rooted throughout its history. It is this contradiction of values and principles within the military that has motivated the evolution of this research study.

A 1989 ruling by a Canadian Human Rights Tribunal directed the Canadian Forces to eliminate employment restrictions based on gender, and to develop a plan for the complete integration of women by the end of the century. The only exception was the submarine service, where restrictions were lifted in March 2001. Now that the military has eliminated all restrictions, various questions follow: Has official acceptance actually manifested itself within the military? If women decide to enroll in the CF combat arms, what are their experiences? Is the motto "Your Pride, Your Choice, Your Future" inclusive of both men and women?

This research is forged from not only a professional interest but also a personal one. I have been involved in the Royal Canadian Army Cadets since 1988. One of the aims of the cadet movement is to stimulate interest in the CF. Throughout my childhood, I was very interested in the army and found myself enthralled by the drill and adventure-based training of the cadet program. I enjoyed the movement and thrived on the challenges it presented and, today, continue to be involved as a reserve officer. Although my experiences are on a small scale, I find myself respecting the organization, the members and what they stand for: courage, bravery, discipline, loyalty. I believe in equal employment opportunities, and I question the regulations that determine military training



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in Canada. Further, I wonder about the existence of sexism within this patriarchal institution.

### *1.1 Historical Background*

#### *1.1.2 A Brief Historical Overview: 1901 to Present*

“Women have served in the military since the beginning of our country. Whatever their task, wherever their placement, service women were subject to many of the same dangers of war as the combat soldiers” (Skaine, 1999, p. 61). Despite the performance of women, questions emerge as to whether women should serve in the United States military. Questions on whether women in the Canadian military are capable of serving in their current capacity also continue. This section includes both the American and Canadian experience. More has been written about the former and it provides a helpful comparative perspective for the analysis of the Canadian experience.

In the United States, from 1901 to 1908, the establishment of the Army and Navy Nurse Corps opened the door for women in the military, albeit only slightly. It was not until the United States became involved in World War II (and women's work efforts were vital) that various branches of the government became serious about using woman power. During World War II, women were accepted in a variety of noncombatant jobs including in munitions factories. This eventually led to the Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948, which formalized the right of women to serve in the military. However, this same act excluded women from combat roles and called for a 2 per cent ceiling for

women recruits (this ceiling was lifted in 1967 during the Vietnam war). As a result, job opportunities were restricted and only about 1 per cent of the active United States military forces were female.

The most powerful agents that combined to change the participation of women in the United States military were the demise of the draft and the growth of the women's rights movement. Conscription was ended in 1970. As a result of this action it was clear that military resources would be needed from both men and women. This occurred as the United States women's rights movement gained power and momentum, and sought equal rights for women in all areas, including the armed forces (Tuten, 1982, p. 246). However, it was unknown what women could learn or were capable of doing in the military. In spite of reservations, the armed forces continued to employ women in a variety of employed roles (Tuten, 1982, p. 246).

The forces maintained this momentum. In the 1990's, the Air Force ended gender ceilings, and in 1995, the Navy followed suit. However, the momentum stopped when both the Army and the Marine Corps continued to exclude women from ground combat units and jobs. Then the Navy retracted an earlier decision to end gender ceilings when they reinstated gender restrictions in 1996 because of ship berthing limitations.

Meanwhile, women were integrated into combat support roles of the United States military. It is important to note that the discourse used here implies the role of combat, yet it is the combat *support* roles within which women are fully integrated. Although there

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are no laws prohibiting women from serving in combat, there is manipulation of the term “combat” to ensure that restrictions are implemented in practice. In 1994 the United States Secretary of Defense gave guidance to the services regarding women in combat and “allowed closure of units whose primary mission is ‘direct combat on the ground,’ defined as units that engage the enemy with individual or crew weapons and with a high probability of physical contact” (Armor, 1996, p. 23). In other words, women were restricted from joining specific units whose fundamental objective was to engage the enemy directly with a likelihood of physical contact. This meant ground combat jobs, and units in the Army and Marine Corps were excluded. Due to berthing limitations the Navy also restricted women’s involvement.

It was the existence of these statutes that had been the major rationale used by Department of National Defence (DOD) to limit the proportion of women in the military. These recent statutory changes caused the Secretary of Defense to ask each service to study the feasibility of presenting further combat or high-risk jobs to women. As a result of these studies, all services have opened a number of previously closed combat positions and units, including most combat aircraft and ships (Armor, 1996, p. 8).

At the time of the Gulf War, there were no statutory restrictions on the assignment of women in the United States Army, but the combat exclusion policy was restrictive. Statutory restrictions were in place in the Navy, Marine Corps (as part of the naval service) and the Air Force. Despite this, the Persian Gulf War significantly contributed to

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eradicating statutes that banned women from combat. It was a historic mark for women in the military, as women did indeed perform combat roles in the Gulf (Skaine, 1999, p. 66).

In Canada, the immediate motivation for increasing women's participation in the early 1970s was a concern about manpower shortages in a now voluntary military. As a result, a large number of noncombat jobs opened up to women. Canada lifted a participation ceiling of 1,500 women, and gradually expanded female employment into non-traditional areas, such as vehicle drivers and mechanics, air-traffic controllers, military police and firefighters (*Women in the Military*, 1998).

A catalyst for enhancing the role of women in combat was the 1971 report by The Royal Commission on the Status of Women (Tanner, 1999, p. 5). This report recommended changes necessary to provide a climate of equal opportunity for women in Canada, with six recommendations aimed specifically at the Canadian Forces (CF). They were: the standardization of enrollment criteria, equal pension benefits, the opportunity for women to attend Canadian Military Colleges, the opening of all trades and officer classifications to women, termination of regulations which prohibited the enrollment of married women and the required release of service women at the birth of a child (Tanner, 1999, p. 5). Once the Department of National Defence (DND) reviewed the recommendations of The Royal Commission on the Status of Women, it took the role of women in combat seriously.

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During the 1980s, however, the proportion of women recruits remained stable. This is primarily because of limited availability of jobs for women and associated recruiting objectives or ceilings. The traditional justification for recruitment ceilings was the existence of statutory exclusions of women from combat jobs and associated DND policies that implemented these statutes.

This justification was no longer accepted as Canada opened combat arms to women for a trial period in 1987. These trials were called Combat-Related Employment of Women (CREW). They were implemented to consider the impact of men and women working together in combat-related employment. However, following a Human Rights Tribunal on equality in 1989, the decision to integrate women was accelerated and the Canadian Forces (CF) was directed to cease CREW trials, and to remove any further employment restrictions based on gender, with the goal of completely integrating women by 1999. On 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2001, formal restrictions were removed from submarine duty. The Oberon class submarines previously used by Canada were not equipped for mixed gender crews and have been replaced with Victoria-class reconditioned diesel-electric subs from the British Navy which allows for mixed gender crews..

The employment considerations as to whether women should serve in combat in the United States military, or are even capable of serving in combat in the Canadian military, view women war workers as if they are a new sensation. Ava Baron suggests that, "the woman question was posed in ways that denied continuity with the past" (1994,

p. 151). Forgotten are the women who served in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and more recently, in the 1989 invasion of Panama in Operation Just Cause and in 1990, Operation Desert Storm.

It is important to briefly reflect on Canada's early military history. Nursing formed the basis for the "first six decades of women's service with the armed forces" (Dundas, 2000, p. 15). As the First World War, 1914-19, progressed and casualties increased, Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF) began employing Canadian women in a variety of positions in Canada. Women worked as clerks, transport drivers, and mechanics (Dundas, 2000, p. 34). Then, in the Second World War, there was a development of many women's organizations augmenting military services. Some of these organizations include: British Columbia Women's Service Corps (BCWSC) lead the development of the Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWAC), Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps (RCAMC) Nursing Service, Royal Canadian Air Force Medical Branch and nursing service, and the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) nursing service. Further, women also found themselves employed in a choice of military specific trades: "administrative; clerks, general and stenographic; cooks; transport drivers; equipment assistants; telephone operators; and standard duties, which include routine duties and mess women" (Dundas, 2000, p. 53). According to Baron, the problem with the woman worker is that she is thought of as "recently created "(1994, p. 151). In reconstructing women's history in combat, there seems to have been a memory lapse, as the American and Canadian military attempted to

remain male-encoded (Baron, 1994, p. 153). This selective memory suggests that women in the military have a shorter history than in fact they have had.

This exclusion of women from an occupation historically reserved for men demands an exploration of how “meanings of masculinity as well as femininity are controlled and naturalized and then structured into the fabric of social relations and institutions, including those predominantly male” (Scott, 1996, p. 148). While notions of masculinity and femininity are beginning to overlap, these concepts are predominantly seen in opposition to each other, as later revealed by the data collected for this study. The result is certain expectations regarding the roles of men and women in both the home and the workplace. Our society “continues to view many types of work as ‘women’s work’ or ‘men’s work’ thinking in terms of gender stereotyping” (Schaefer et al., 1994, p. 206).

This stereotyping is visible through behaviours of the actors involved. At times signs were present outside the Crow’s Nest, an Officers’ Mess located in downtown St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador, that referred to letting women into the bar and hoping that “they won’t clutter up the place.” (D. Facey-Crowther, personal communication, December 17, 2002). Although it may be an urban legend, many military historians remember another sign placed outside the Crow’s Nest stating, “No Dogs or Women Allowed” (P.Collins, R. Sarty, M. Milner, personal communication, December 17, 2002).

Gender expectations are naturalized in predominantly male arenas such as the military. Gender stereotypes “present women with cultural dilemmas” (Evetts, 1996, p.73). By looking at the ultimate example of a predominantly male institution, the military, it is possible to explore further these meanings of masculinity and femininity, and their implications.

### *1.1.3 Historical Profile of The Royal Newfoundland Regiment*

The Royal Newfoundland Regiment (RNR) has a unique history as the oldest military unit in North America. This is intriguing, as its record of service includes the War of 1812, Gallipoli and Western Europe (1914-18) and numerous United Nation (UN) assignments. It is a unit that has a history of courageous young men volunteering to serve their country. The Regiment also has unique ties to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, many of whom can point to a relative or friend who has served in this outstanding reserve unit.

Although the official birthday of the unit is May 1975 has a much longer history. The war of 1812 found soldiers of what was to become this Regiment tasked as marines. These soldiers were constantly praised for bravery and discipline. Newfoundland soldiers were also among the first to answer the call for Commonwealth troops during the War in Europe in 1914, even though there were no armed forces of any type at that time in the country. Recruitment began and the First Five Hundred were soon training. This group was known as the Blue Puttees (Cramm, 1921, p. 20).



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At that time they were known as The Newfoundland Regiment, and their first actions were in Egypt and Gallipoli. The Regiment is the only unit in Canada with the battle honor, Gallipoli. After serving in Turkey, the Regiment was moved to France for the battle of Somme. On July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1916, the Regiment went over the top at Beaumont-Hamel as the reserve battalion of the 88<sup>th</sup> Brigade. The soldiers of the Regiment had watched as the forward battalions had been decimated by German machine guns, but when the order came for them to advance, they did not falter. Within an hour it was over and “the final grim figures that revealed the virtual annihilation of the Battalion gave a count of 14 officers and 219 other ranks killed or died of wounds, 12 officers and 34 other ranks wounded, and 91 other ranks missing” (Nicholson, 1964, p. 274). During this day, which was the worst single day of casualties in British Army history, the Regiment suffered the highest percent of casualties.

Lieutenant General Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston, K.C.B., D.S.O (Knight Commander of the British Empire, Distinguished Service Order), Commander of the Seventh Army Corps said, “I would like to let my fellow citizens of the Empire in the oldest overseas portion of the British Realm know how well their lads have done and how proud I, as their Corps Commander, am to have had such a battalion under my command and to be a comrade in arms of each and all of them. Newfoundlanders, I salute you! You are better than the best” (Facey-Crowther, 1995, p. 15). From this point on, the Regiment adopted the phrase “Better than the Best!” as its unofficial motto.

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The Regiment rebuilt itself and was back in action within a few months. The unit fought in World War I, including the battle of Cambrai, where tanks were used for the first time (Cramm, 1921, p. 87). The Regiment was honored with the title, "Royal," for its action in this encounter (Cramm, 1921, p. 91). For the heroic advances of The Regiment a bronze caribou was erected overlooking the battlefield of Beaumont Hamel (Nicholson, 1964, p. 200). The caribou is the symbol of the unit, and is worn on the cap badge. The Regiment disbanded in 1919. However, on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1949, authority was granted by King George VI to revive The Royal Newfoundland Regiment as a reserve unit of the Canadian Army (Nicholson, 1964, p. 184). The Regiment continued with its training and in July 1952, Major General Plow singled them out to congratulate them on being the best Reserve unit at Camp Utopia, and said their "zeal and enthusiasm was outstanding" (O'Flaherty, 1952, p. 22). The Regiment continues today in the spirit of the past.

### *1.2 Personal Account*

In 1988, I became a member of the Royal Canadian Army Cadet organization. I joined because my hometown – Robinson's, Newfoundland – lacked activities for youth. This was a chance to meet people, travel and earn money. I had a wonderful and memorable cadet career, including the opportunity to travel as far as Alberta and to do glacier travel. I received awards for both outstanding and most disciplined cadet. These awards were very distinguished and each trophy featured a cadet standing tall and proud.

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But, they were also male. Reminders that I was part of something male would be pervasive as I continued my involvement in the organization.

In 1996, I enrolled in the Canadian Forces (CF) and became a member of the Cadet Instructors Cadre<sup>2</sup>. I have had many wonderful experiences traveling, working with youth and expanding my knowledge through numerous courses. However, I have also experienced some difficulties with the male mentality of the cadre.

During the summer of 1997, I was an officer cadet (OCdt), 20 years old and not yet with my commissioning scroll<sup>3</sup>. There was a male Captain who was approximately 28 years old who thought it was his right to “ogle” the young female officers. One night while at the officers’ mess, he called out to me and, rather than speaking to me, he decided that speaking to my chest was better. Instead of telling him that I was “up here” I had to remember my subordinate position. He was calling me by my first name, yet I was required to address him by his rank and punctuate my statements with “Sir.” Such incidents happened quite frequently, not only in the officers’ mess but in places of work as well.

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<sup>2</sup>

Established in 1871, the primary function of the Cadet Instructors Cadre is the training, administration and supervision of cadets, as stated in section 43 of the National Defence Act.

<sup>3</sup> The commissioning scroll is a call to service from the reigning monarch.

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I was employed in the field, and consequently did not get a chance to come into the officers' mess very often. However, when I did come into the camp there was always a story involving the above-mentioned officer. Eventually, he harassed the wrong person. One night at a camp mess dinner, this Captain decided that it was his right to slap a British female officer (with whom I worked closely) on her buttock. To my recollection, this officer turned to him, grabbed his hand and shouted, "Don't you ever fucking touch me again, or I'll smack you." I remember getting her to tell me this repeatedly. I was so proud that she stood up to him. I wondered what the other male and female officers did when they saw this but apparently they just laughed. This was not a group of people from which one could draw support from.

A few months later, I got a call from an investigator about the incident. He asked me if I witnessed this occurrence and I said "no." However, I did tell him that I had worked with the female officer in question and I had asked her to tell me about the incident. He visited me in my apartment an hour later. When I answered the door, this huge (6'3") man greeted me. He flashed his badge and came on in. I answered his questions the best that I could. He then asked that I write up a personal statement about what had happened. I was free to include any other information. I wrote about the many things that my friends revealed to me. Then I wrote about the incident concerning the female British Officer. After it was all written down, he asked me if I would be willing to go to court and testify, if it came to that. I thought about it. I thought that if this officer-

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this woman - finally had the courage to report this harassment, I was not about to let her stand alone, so I agreed. Shortly after that I was browsing the DND web site and noticed an announcement. Although it gave no names, it stated that:

Charges laid – Assault  
23 November 1998  
CFPM-98.051

OTTAWA - On November 20, the Canadian Forces National Investigation Service (CFNIS) laid two charges of assault and conduct to the prejudice of good order and discipline against a 28 year-old captain of Halifax, a member of the cadet instructor cadre. The charges are as a result of an incident that allegedly occurred at the Army Cadet Summer Training School, Combat Training Centre, Gagetown, New-Brunswick, in August 1997. The member allegedly grabbed and pushed a 28 year-old woman, a British exchange officer, during a mess dinner at the cadet camp.

The member is charged under section 129 and 130 of the National Defence Act. Section 129 refers to conduct to the prejudice of good order and discipline and section 130 refers to a breach of other federal statutes, in this case section 266 of the Criminal Code of Canada (assault).  
(*Department of National Defence*, 1998).

When I reflect on this incident I am glad that things worked out, yet I find myself experiencing feelings of frustration on two levels. One level concerns my personal identity. I wonder why I did not have the nerve to do something about that officer and react to the many different ways that he treated me that made me feel so uncomfortable. I

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wonder why I acted so passively. I like to think of myself as a very independent, assertive woman. Nevertheless, when I had to deal with this person, why did I revert to the passive woman's role? Was it a combination of traditionally engraved values regarding women and the extremely male-dominated and highly hierarchal institution that is the Canadian military that made me react the way that I did?

The other level concerns the action taken by the Canadian Forces (CF). Although I am pleased that action was taken and the truth was determined, I cannot help but wonder if this incident was taken seriously because it involved an officer from overseas and perhaps, in this case, our foreign relations were a consideration. In my view, there are three points to consider before coming to the conclusion that this example can be considered progressive. Firstly, the reality is that although this male officer was charged concerning one incident of harassment, there was a minimum of five other female officers who tolerated it. I was one of those officers. Secondly, the fact that charges were laid indicates, at the very minimum, that leadership supports women on an individual basis. It is important to remember that the male and female service personnel present during the incident did not initiate any corrective action; they just laughed. This may suggest that, although leadership supports women on an individual basis, little concrete action has been taken on other levels to intervene and to stop harassment and discrimination. Thirdly, although stress is an aspect of work that every employee must deal with at one time or another, why must there be continuous exposure to an unpleasant environment or

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harassment? Although women have equal access to career opportunities within the military, incidents like these suggest that problems remain.

### *1.3 The Proposed Research*

From my personal experiences, a central issue began to evolve: "*Although women enter the combat arms and compete at the same level as men, are there social structures and boundaries in place that hinder women's integration in the military?*" What are these social structures and boundaries? If these informal boundaries are present, how do women react? Why do women choose to work in this environment? Do these boundaries promote women's vulnerability to harassment and mistreatment?

### *Conclusion*

This chapter provides background on the military, specifically the reserve unit, The Royal Newfoundland Regiment. It also discusses my personal experience with the CF as a reserve officer in the Cadet Instructors Cadre. This combines with academic curiosity, and prompts me to pose my questions, and, as a sociologist, attempt to find some answers. As helpful background to addressing these questions, a review of the pertinent literature is necessary.

## Chapter 2:Literature Review and Methodology

### *Introduction*

This chapter will address arguments for and against women entering the military. Literature on women in the Canadian military is limited. Therefore, a discussion of both Canadian and American literature is necessary. These writings provide the framework to help us to understand the development of the research question.

### *2.1 Literature Review*

Challenging the outlook of the Canadian Forces (CF) and their deeply entrenched customs is the influx of women into a previously all-male military. One might expect that women would not fit into the highly structured, tradition-bound military society. Yet, women have shown that they can adapt to the military's institutional social values, rules, and lifestyle.

This development fuels the controversy surrounding women's entitlement to serve in the CF in whatever capacity for which they qualify. While Canadian literature is limited on the subject of women in the military, there is a large body of literature on women in the United States military. The structure of the US military, and the questions concerning women in combat, are similar to those of the CF. Although the Canadian military allows women to enter all aspects of combat trades, the United States army has not yet made this decision. Nevertheless, the issues present in American literature mirror



the few studies that have been conducted in Canada. Two opposing arguments in the United States are represented by Brian Mitchell and Major General Jeanne M. Holm.

Brian Mitchell, a former United States Army infantry officer and intelligence agent, is a reporter for Navy Times newspaper. Mitchell is also the author of *Weak Link: The Feminization of the American Military* (1989). Mitchell's controversial argument is that warfare is indeed 'men's work' and that the net result of the impact of women on the military force is negative. Furthermore, barring women from serving in the military is not necessarily a female issue but a matter of national security.

These arguments are also echoed in several articles compiled in *Women in the Military*, edited by Carol Wekesser and Matthew Polesetsky (1991). This work is particularly useful when looking at the different debates and extreme positions that surround this subject. "Women in the Military Harm America's Defense" by Jean Yarbrough; and "Children Are Harmed When Mothers Serve in the Military" by Elaine Donnelly, clearly put forth the argument that women simply are not suited for combat. Each reflects the notion that, because women are physically and emotionally weaker than men, they cannot fight effectively. They assert that women weaken the military by causing morale problems, and are simply unsuited for the combat role.

These views are further supported by other works such as in *Female Soldiers - Combatants or Noncombatants* (1982), including the article "The Argument Against Female Combatants" by Jeff M. Tuten. A historical perspective is provided where men

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were the hunters and women were the keepers of the home and bearers of the children. Similarly, the prevailing issue of physical differences is touted, that women were smaller, weaker, slower and had less physical endurance than males. While Tuten acknowledges women's changing role in the twentieth century as they become involved in the war effort and the civilian work force, he asserts that there are still areas that remain a matter of concern. These areas include physical fitness and medical considerations. He claims that men have greater physical endurance, they can carry heavier loads longer distances at greater speeds, they can throw heavier objects (such as hand grenades) farther and more accurately, and they can do all of these things under greater extremes of temperature. Ultimately, Tuten claims, everything we know about physical and psychological differences between the sexes indicates that women are less well suited for combat.

Major General (MGen) Jeanne M. Holm, author of *Women in the Military* (1992), enlisted in the Army in July 1942. She was promoted to the grade of Major General effective June 1, 1973, and became the first woman in the United States Armed Forces to serve in that grade. Major General Holm is frequently cited in academic debates concerning service women and she is considered an expert in this area. Her book analyzes the role of American military women in all post-Vietnam military operations including the Persian Gulf War. She investigates the advances made by women in the U.S. Armed Forces during the 1980s, and subsequent resistance to these advances. Her place within this debate is clear: Major General Holm maintains that women have a place in combat.

These views are further supported by other works such as in *Female Soldiers - Combatants or Noncombatants* (1982), including the article "The Argument for Female Combatants" by Mary Wechsler Segal. Segal highlights a number of physiological characteristics of women that are often seen as limiting their capacity for combat, but maintains that not all women possess these characteristics. She discusses the claim that the average woman is weaker in upper body strength and is careful to advise "not to confuse a difference in average physical strength between men and women with a situation in which all men are strong enough and no women are" (p. 270). Segal also brings to the surface the very interesting argument regarding sex role socialization and physical training. She predicts that the increased participation of girls in sports will result in more physically fit female adults. Further, while some question women's ability to perform under stress, Segal asserts that there is no evidence of this and "military women have performed on par with their male peers in difficult circumstances and in situations of severe psychological pressure" (p. 274).

In *Arms and the Enlisted Woman*, Judith Stiehm (1989) also echoes the argument for women in combat. She delivers a critique of the political manipulations of social research, revealing the military's bias against women. An example of this bias is evident when the allocation of women to 'traditionally female' administrative and clerical positions is rationalized according to data which allege that women are happy in these sorts of jobs. However, there is a failure to acknowledge that men are also happy in such

positions. Her conviction is “that the so-called ‘woman-problem’ in the military is actually men’s problem - more a reflection of men’s inability to accept women’s ability to defend their country” (p. 151).

In light of the different points of view, it is instructive to consider Brian Mitchell’s controversial arguments presented in *Weak Link: The Feminization of the American Military* (1989) in more detail. Mitchell asserts that the idea that women generally perform as well as men is not proven. He also offers many reasons why women are a liability to the military.

Mitchell believes that there are obvious physical limitations for female soldiers and that these limitations will directly affect their ability to perform assigned duties. It is often assumed that technology has alleviated the need for physical strength. However, Mitchell claims that technology has not “provided the Air Force with automatic litter-loaders to move wounded soldiers onto MEDEVAC aircraft when female loadmasters are unable to do so, nor has it relieved the Army of the task of sorting military rounds by hand” (1989, p. 157). He also claims that “female missile mechanics often lack the strength and physical confidence to harness and move warheads and to manoeuvre large pieces of machinery” and that “some have trouble carrying their own tool boxes” (1989, p. 157). Mitchell believes that men have to do more work to make up for the limitations of their female co-workers (1989, p. 157).

Mitchell argues that women cannot cope with the primitive, rough living conditions and the physical demands in a combat zone. The empirical reality, however, is that women can and do cope. According to Major General Holm, during the Persian Gulf War many women lived like 'grunts' in the field. Women slept in coed tents so cramped that "if anyone turned over, you knew it" (1992, p. 462). These women also slept under temporary shelters known as lean-tos set up beside the trucks that they drove.

Another argument offered by Mitchell is that, due to a lack of physical strength, women also need greater medical attention than men. This includes attention to mental disorders, musculoskeletal afflictions, acute upper-respiratory infections, medical and surgical aftercare, rubella, infective and parasitic disease, and digestive, diarrheal, and genitourinary disorders<sup>4</sup> (1989, p. 162). He also states that women suffer more medical injuries and thus require greater medical attention. Mitchell presents no empirical evidence to support his claims.

According to a study carried out by Dennis Kowal on injuries during army basic training, women experienced a higher rate of injuries than men, but a major cause of women's injuries was a lack of prior fitness and conditioning. In an attempt to identify

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Musculoskeletal afflictions deal mainly with the muscles and their associated ligaments and other connective tissue and of the bones and cartilage viewed collectively. An upper-respiratory infection would be any number of viral or bacterial infections that includes infections of the throat, nasopharynx, sinuses, larynx, trachea or bronchi. A parasitic disease is due to the presence and vital activity of a parasite, or as a reaction to a parasite (On-Line Medical Dictionary, 2003).

these problems, Kowal suggested “pre-enlistment screening to identify those men and women most at risk, coupled with remedial training before the more strenuous physical regimen of basic training” (Goldman, 1982, p.271). The increased participation of young girls in sports such as soccer, hockey, and football means that more girls will develop into healthy, strong adults who would be suitable for the military.

Another issue is the claim that women tend to leave the services because of pregnancy. Mitchell reports that “25 to 50 percent of women who fail to complete enlistment contracts do so because of pregnancy” (1989, p. 166). He sees pregnancy as a temporary disability inflicted upon oneself without fear of punishment. Pregnancy can be used as a way of escaping commitment to duty. Furthermore, he states that pregnant women are exempt from many military duties including parades or ceremonies, sea duty, chemical warfare training and much more. He concludes his argument with the claim that “the good of the service has all but been abandoned in dealing with the problem of pregnancy” (1989, p. 171).

Pregnancy is a popular argument used to support the exclusion of women from combat. Pregnancy is seen as a disability in the performance of combat jobs. In contrast, others have noted that the average woman is only pregnant for a small proportion of her life, and some women never become pregnant at all. As with other conditions that require the reassignment of personnel, “contingency plans must be made for the reassignment and replacement of pregnant women when their pregnancy interferes with their job

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performance” (Goldman, 1982, p. 272). It is important not to assume that pregnant women cannot do their job and automatically reassign them. The fact that most women can get pregnant is no reason to exclude all women from a particular job, just as the fact that “men can get the flu or venereal diseases are not used to exclude them from a job” (Goldman, 1982, p. 273).

Major General Holm also addresses the debate surrounding mothers and pregnancy. Claims that mothers are given special care such as preferred treatment in assignments, or that they are additional burdens to other personnel, are not supported by the Army’s own data. MGen Holm asserts that during a particular period “although several hundred women with children were on active duty, the Directorate of Enlisted Personnel identified in a period of six months only thirty-nine cases of Army enlisted women seeking to be taken off assignments due to parenthood” (1992, p. 300). Furthermore, only “sixteen of these requests were approved, and the enlisted women involved received no special consideration.” The data showed that “an enlisted woman with dependents was provided the same assistance that would be provided any soldier. No more, no less” (1992, p. 301). According to this line of reasoning, the pregnancy debate is a myth used to create barriers to protect this male arena.

There is an interesting twist to this debate on pregnancy. Although the Army studied a sample of women, it had no available data on how many enlisted men were deleted or deferred from assignments due to family responsibilities. However, the Army

did know that “some five hundred men a year were given twelve-week deferments from overseas assignments because their civilian wives were in an advanced stage of pregnancy” and that “by comparison, the average time lost by military women during pregnancy was only eleven weeks” (Holm, 1992, p. 301). It is important to consider both sides of any argument that potentially excludes women from any domain.

Mitchell also investigated fraternization. Fraternization policy restricts undue familiarity between juniors and seniors, whether males or females (Skaine, 1999, p. 192). He asserted that “nothing has done more to cheapen rank and diminish respect for authority than cute little female lieutenants and privates” (1989, p. 176). This statement clearly shows the lack of respect that would be given to women in uniform without any assessment of credibility. He continues with the claim that “many women who wander into a recruiting office know and care little about military tradition, and their initial training does nothing to correct their essentially civilian regard for the same” and that “many consider the customs of service quaint, silly, and boyish” (1989, p. 176). Mitchell makes the unwarranted assumption that all women hold an utter disregard for the rules laid down by the military. He is also unhappy with the flexibility of the fraternization rule. The Navy and Marine Corps still prohibit romantic relationships between officers and enlisted personnel. The US Army and Air Force, on the other hand, liberalized officer and enlisted relations in 1984. The CF also made this decision. Mitchell believes that this has added confusion to the system and created a drop in morale.



Against Mitchell's claim that men and women cannot work together without generating sexual tension, other observers note that men and women have been witnessed working side by side without sexual tension interfering. Major General Holm discusses the issues of fraternization and sexual tension. She observes that "the men and women serving side-by-side in the Gulf demonstrated that they were capable of working together as teams; they could be comrades without "fraternizing"; they could share tents without sharing beds; [and] they could share common dangers without feigning chivalry" (1992, p. 463). Furthermore, it is her belief that if there were any tensions within a unit, whether they were sexual or racial or otherwise, it showed lack of leadership and proper training. Women and men work in virtually all other occupations without fraternization causing such major debates and presumptions of hindrance to the success of their work. Women can be fire fighters, construction workers, employed in business related enterprises, and much more, without causing complications with fraternization.

Mitchell has addressed many issues including motherhood and marriage, homosexuality, psychological differences between men and women, the effect of women on male bonding, women's likelihood to corrupt allegiance to the hierarchy, and the view that women are simply "management problems" (1989, p. 192). According to Mitchell's arguments, the best man for the job is always a man. However, empirical evidence and counter arguments indicate that it is unwise to generalize. For example, Holm demonstrates that the issue of women in combat roles is a complex one that is too often

oversimplified. The debate reflects how elusive the arguments are against women's ability to serve in combat.

## *2.2 Significance in Relation to Existing Research*

Canada's Department of National Defence (DND) has conducted several studies that explore the effects of integration and harassment within the Regular Force and, on a smaller scale, within the Reserves. Lieutenant (N) K. D. Davis and Virginia Thomas (1998) completed a study on the Regular Force entitled *Chief Land Staff Gender Integration Study: The Experience of Women Who Have Served In The Combat Arms*. Physical strength and stamina of female recruits are prominent issues in this research. Male trainees and supervisors continue to question women's physical ability to perform essential duties. Even if female recruits were initially strong enough to meet the physical standards, the assumptions were made that they would not be able to maintain these standards over time (1998, p. 7). The study discusses the common "fraternization" debate. Some assume that women who choose a nontraditional role also express nontraditional values regarding chastity and, hence, must be "loose" women. Furthermore, some women report that "regardless of how they conducted themselves socially, it was rumored by men that they had slept with numerous men in the unit" (1998, p. 20).

The research by Lieutenant (N) Davis clearly implies that "the lens through which women are observed and evaluated is tinted in a way that discredits and devalues women in relation to male norms and standards" (1998, p. 7). The majority of men in the

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Canadian army believe that if women enter this trade they must have the physical stamina equivalent to their male counterparts. However, as women attempt to do this, men continue to believe that women should remain in the support units.

The interest shown by Davis mirrors my own research questions: Do women in the Reserve Force experience the same environment as women in the Regular Force? Are the issues of physical strength and stamina as prevalent in the part-time component of the CF?

In discussions of prevailing attitudes toward gender integration, the army is the least supportive of the Forces for full gender integration, equity and multiculturalism. Perhaps more disturbingly, men in the combat arms are more likely to perceive women as 'another problem' to be dealt with, rather than as a resource needing to be developed (Davis and Thomas, 1998, p. 31). How does this affect women as they enter this trade? Is this mind-set as prevalent in the Reserve Force as it is in the Regular Force?

The Annual Harassment Report, conducted with the Regular Force in Canada, stated that 51.0% of the military members who laid formal harassment complaints in Fiscal Year (FY) 96/97 were women. This is a cause for concern since women account for only 10.8% of the Regular Force (Tanner, 1999, p. 72). In addition, more women do apply for the Reserve units, yet there is little information on this component of the CF.

A continuous question is, how do women survive in the "last male bastion," an environment in which an unwelcome overtone permeates day-to-day activities? Women

are in a “male-defined and male-dominated environment” which “has resulted in ambiguous perceptions and beliefs, on the part of peers, supervisors and instructors” (Tanner, 1999, p. 44). Men design this environment that trains men, and the beliefs present assume the male soldier as a form of a hegemonic masculinity. This dominant masculinity denotes power, brute force, heterosexuality, and an inclination toward technology. Further, perceptions of women’s ability are based, to a considerable extent, on “cultural (male) assumptions related to accepted, expected, and/or ‘appropriate’ social and sexual behaviours and gender roles” (Tanner, 1999, p. 44).

These beliefs lead to presumptions about women in training. Instructors convey the negative attitude that women cannot be effective leaders as they do not have ‘command presence’ (Tanner, 1999, p. 34). Command presence refers to a person’s ability to automatically assume the role of authority, to be thought the person in charge without having to actually announce it. This issue of a ‘command presence’ has no empirical base on which to stand, yet it is a frequent issue. Perceptions of some instructors and supervisors then serve to reinforce the belief that “women are not suitable candidates” for service in combat arms (Tanner, 1999, p. 47).

To further understand these issues, it is necessary to study the actual experiences of women who choose to partake in an occupation in which they are the “minority gender” (Tanner, 1999, p. 64). One of the recommendations from the Tanner study (1999)

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is that problematic Military Occupation Codes (MOCs), such as the combat trades, must be further analyzed to determine systemic barriers for women.

Relevant to my research, Tanner suggests that gender inequality is not a deterrent to female Reserve Force members in transferring to the Regular Force. Does this suggest that gender inequality is not present in the Reserve Force? Does it suggest that women tend to enjoy the Reserves? Does this experience in the Reserves influence their decision to transfer to the Regular Force? Perhaps not. Women are, generally, less likely than men to consider such a transfer. There must be other influencing factors since the majority of the CF applicants apply for the reserves.

Major (Maj) Jane E. Adams-Roy conducted another study, *Harassment in the Canadian Forces: Results of the 1998 Survey* (1999), on harassment issues in the Regular Force. In 1988, the Canadian Forces promulgated an order on personal harassment, clearly stating that harassment would not be tolerated. The survey concluded that the most frequently cited form of harassment for women was personal harassment on the basis of sex. This was followed by harassment based on physical characteristics and mannerisms (1999, p. 15). The 'Old Boys' network was extensively discussed by the serving population and was marginally mentioned by the trainee population. Extensive discussion revolved around that phenomenon in the military (1999, p. 34). A participant in Major (Maj) Adams-Roy's study commented that:

either the “older” generation who still have problems accepting women as anything other than child-bearers and dishwashers or the combat-arms officer mentality who still believe puking their guts out every weekend and either 1. Belittle me for not getting drunk with them or 2. Hit on me and then take offence when I tell them to take a hike...The ‘old boys’ network still exists and until the CF does some serious “attitude adjustments” things will not improve. (1999, p.34)

Even though the Reserve Force appeals more to women than the Regular Force, limited research has been conducted on the reserves. Hence, existing literature fails to adequately address the situation of women in the Reserve Force. Studies addressing the Regular Force raise questions about why the Reserve Force application rate is higher for women than it is for men. Several themes must be addressed: mentality of the military institution, expectations of women who enter (both physical and sexual), the ‘Old Boys’ network, harassment policies, and repercussions. Many questions remain after considering the debate in the current literature.

### *2.3 Research Questions*

The primary research question has been stated previously “*Although women enter the combat arms and compete at the same level as men, are there social structures and boundaries in place that hinder women’s integration in the military?*” But other questions drive the curiosity of this research: Why do women want to be part of an organization that is so utterly ingrained with everything that is masculine? Why would a woman want to prove herself over and over again? Everyday? Why even bother? Surely there are better jobs and better ways to make money?

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The military's doors are open. However, can the male-dominated ideology that has been present for so long change to include women? Although women and men train together, the dominant image of the soldier is one who engages in combat as the ultimate test of his manliness, which can be defined as tough, aggressive, ambitious, and protecting. This male ideology permeates the foundation of the military institution.

These kinds of questions and personal reflections motivated me to want to do more systematic research on the role of women in the military, and on the extent to which inherent belief systems and behaviours have or have not changed in recent years. The specific military organization that I studied is a reserve unit, The Royal Newfoundland Regiment. Through my own experience I have witnessed the immense loyalty and dedication that members feel toward The Regiment. I am interested in how women maintain such loyalty while potentially facing both internal and organizational conflict. This is an infantry reserve unit, and its members are trained to kill. These are soldiers whose motto boasts, "Better than the Best!" Think about what that means. What does it mean to be better than the best? Not only are you putting high expectations on yourself, but on everyone in your unit. What mentality is present by the social organization, or by the individuals in this unit, to have such expectations? It is a male-dominated environment in which women have recently become a part. What effect have women had on The RNR? How do women fit in? Why would they want to? I have chosen to study The RNR in order to explore the commitment of CF leadership to gender integration, and

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the consequences and experiences of the women who do choose to enter The Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

Two battalions comprise The Royal Newfoundland Regiment. The First Battalion, located in St. John's, consists of a Regimental Band and two companies. There are one-hundred and forty soldiers on strength. The regimental band has twenty-two members, twelve of whom are women. The unit has by trade: two Medics, one of whom is a woman; one Supply who is male; four Resource Management Systems (RMS and includes administration and finance positions) clerks, all of whom are women; and 133 Infantry, four of whom are women. The Second Battalion is located in Corner Brook, Grand Falls-Windsor and Stephenville. The unit is composed of three companies. There are 102 soldiers on strength. The unit has by trade: two Medics, one of whom is a woman; two Supply, both of whom are male; 12 RMS clerks, five of whom are women; one Padre who is male; two Vehicle Technicians, both of whom are male; and 83 Infantry, six of whom are women<sup>5</sup>.

The Regiment continues today with tremendous loyalty and pride. As one respondent said, "The infantry mentality is always that we're better...the first trade, the last trade, the only trade that will ever be." When I started my research, I could feel and witness the pride of these soldiers. During my initial visit I felt that this was a place where I wanted to be. This feeling grew as I continued to visit the training areas of the

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<sup>5</sup> These numbers reflect the nominal roll as provided in January 2002.



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unit. Despite any hesitations I had about women fitting in, I already felt that I could assimilate and that I wanted to be there.

#### *2.4 The Research Setting: A Personal Perspective*

On my first visit to The Regiment, I entered building 3-10 located at Canadian Forces Station Pleasantville and heard the constant tramp of combat boots as they went up and down the stairs carrying out orders and conducting routine training. Surrounding me were the soldiers of The Royal Newfoundland Regiment. When I first came down to this unit during May 2001, the ache in my stomach was extraordinary. When I was a child I was plagued with a nervous stomach before school when something different or new was occurring, such as a test or my first time speaking in public. I thought my body had triumphed over this nervous stomach but it resurfaced each and every time I visited the research site.

These visits became frequent throughout the course of the study. I attended regular training nights from 6 April 2001 to 7 October 2002. I also accompanied The First Battalion RNR on two overnight expeditions each giving me an opportunity to observe and participate in training. During the first field training exercise I even performed sentry duty from 0100h until 0300h. The second field training exercise was Nautical Caper, this exercise is discussed later in the thesis. Throughout the course of the study I also received invitations to attend social functions such as a performance of The RNR band at the Reid Theatre at Memorial University of Newfoundland on 5 May 2001. After the performance

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I was invited to attend the reception. I also spent the month of October 2001 in Corner Brook. During this visit I was able to participate in various weekend training. This consisted of such subjects as first aid, map and compass, field signals and formations. I also had an opportunity to learn the proper technique when throwing a dummy grenade. During this time I also visited the Grand Falls-Windsor and Stephenville training areas. However, it is the feelings I dealt with during my first visit that remain with me.

Upon my initial visit, I walked past the research site several times before I gathered the courage to enter. I would walk by and see the soldiers standing near the door smoking and I would lose all nerve and begin to question why I was even there daring to become a part of this unit. I had no strategy in mind to gain access to this site. I had no plan of action. I felt physically ill when it came time to walk into the building, the entrance surrounded by soldiers. My eyes were initially drawn to what I thought were big, brawny soldiers and, for once in my life, I actually felt inferior. Upon entering the building however, my attention was drawn also to the women of this unit and to other male soldiers who were not large or intimidating.

I put a lot of thought into my personal presentation before I went to the unit. I agonized over what I should wear. I was also unsure what to say when asked why I was there. I am sure that the people I met were tired of me saying that I was a student at Memorial University conducting research in an attempt to finish my Masters of Arts degree. I was nervous about telling them that I was studying the integration of women. I

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was afraid that this would shut doors, but I told them anyway. I decided to be as honest and forthright as I could. But I asked *myself* why was I there. What was I doing in this environment? Why did I put myself through these feelings of seclusion and nervousness? As a social scientist, I was faced with immense feelings of awkwardness. But, I knew there was something about the Regiment that I wanted to investigate further.

After that first visit, I enjoyed returning to the Regiment. I wanted to obtain an understanding of the members and tried to empathize with them. This site became a focal point of my life as I proceeded with the study. There were several soldiers that made me feel like family. I think I established a rapport with those at the site. Would I dare to think that I now have an understanding of what the soldiers meant when they talked about The Regiment as family? I would like to think that I now have at least a partial understanding of what this means. Several soldiers that I met, and others that I interviewed, helped me to realize the importance of my research. This encouraged me to understand and try to make others understand what it means to be an infantry soldier in The Royal Newfoundland Regiment. I understand that while some things might change, some issues remain the same. Several members commented on this, but one soldier said it best, "I like the esprit de corps and the work ethic and the sense of pride."

### *2.5 Methodology*

The research takes a grounded theory approach to sociological investigation. This generates concepts and categories that help explain the particular social actions of members of The RNR during the research itself that will be elaborated on later in the thesis. A qualitative approach was most appropriate for my research as I proposed to study attitudes and behaviours of soldiers in their natural setting. The social scientist is fortunate since an observation of relationships and social processes in the subjects' natural habitat is possible. This allows the social scientist to better explain the forces influencing the phenomena in question and to identify the causal networks shaping such phenomena. What social structures and boundaries are in place that shape women's experience? How do these social structures and boundaries interact to shape the experiences of those under investigation? Further, how do women recreate these social structures and boundaries as they negotiate their participation in this field?

Observation and in-depth interviewing are two crucial techniques in qualitative research. They essentially embodied the core of my field research carried out in the St. John's, Grand Falls-Windsor, Corner Brook, and Stephenville companies that comprise the two battalions of The Royal Newfoundland Regiment. The early stages of field work, dating back to May 2001, entailed primarily participant observation during training and field exercises. I participated in training exercises with the full cooperation of The RNR. During this initial period of field work, much of my role as a social scientist is described

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best as participant-as-observer. While using field research methods, I was confronted with decisions about the role I played as an observer and my relations with the people I observed. I had to prove myself and show them I was serious. I was invited to attend exercises, one of them being, 'Nautical Caper.' This was an exercise where The RNR carried out different tactics such as assault boat training and guarding a bridge from the enemy. At this time, an incident occurred that was a crucial turning point in my relationship with the soldiers.

I was not told exactly what would happen on this exercise, except that it was going to be very cold and to dress warmly. I had heard stories of previous Nautical Caper exercises and the horrors experienced. When I arrived at The Regiment building the night of the exercise I was wearing a winter survival suit and ski-do boots because I was continuously told to wear the proper clothing since it was going to be wet and cold. However, the night was an unusually warm one and I found myself sweating. I would have been comfortable in a long sleeve shirt; however, the issue of clothing and the brutality of the weather was given so much emphasis that I felt that I would have been questioned more if I showed up with less clothing. However, when I arrived at the base I was told that I had too much clothing on, and found myself putting everything into my rucksack to carry. Interestingly, at a later time I was given a stern warning of the difficulties to come, and was asked if what I was wearing was all the clothing that I had with me.

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The first night I was taken to the command post. Initially, I was brought to a different area than the other soldiers; I was the only female and they were not quite sure where to put me. I was left with another soldier to put up a temporary shelter, known as a hoochie, in the dark. We stood there for several seconds until a different soldier came up and said that it was silly to be sleeping up here and trying to put a hoochie up in the dark. He went on to say that I could come down with the rest of them and sleep in his hoochie. I felt a lot better sleeping with them rather than spending the night alone. This negotiation of gender based segregation was required if I were to be accepted.

Later I was attached to a platoon and was able to experience much of the training. This included eating the IMPs (Individual Meal Packs) provided. The soldiers did not have the opportunity to heat their meals and when it was time to eat, some of the food was warm but much more of it was cold. I had eaten IMPs before but never cold; warm, the food is digestible, cold, it is hardly even that. One constant problem was using the washroom. When it came time for a male soldier to urinate, he would simply go to the tree line and turn his back to the troops. I was not comfortable doing this and was not sure where was a good place to go, as there were troops everywhere. This problem intensified at night time.

Later in the day the platoon began to prepare themselves for a 7-km rucksack march. When I was asked if I was going to march with the troops, I said yes. However, I was totally unprepared to do any hiking, let alone a 7-km hike. I had entirely too much kit

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packed. The issue of clothing had been stressed and I found myself with a 40-pound rucksack that included an extra set of clothes, a winter survival suit, rain gear, the sweatshirt that I should have worn, clothing lent to me by members throughout the exercise, personal wash kit, and meal rations. Now I found myself carrying all this extra gear in my rucksack, and doing a 7-km ruck march with ski-do boots on my feet. One of the sergeants approached me and said that it was not necessary for me to do the hike. I knew that it was necessary and it was even more important to finish it. I was also told that if I was tired I could stop and ride in the vehicle that was following behind. But I knew this was not an option. I still believe that if I had not been able to complete the hike, it would have been detrimental to my research. I began the march with the mind-set that it was all or nothing. It was with determination that I completed the hike, while other soldiers fell out. I had proven my worth and this became a turning point in my relationship with the unit.

Assuming the role of observer-as-participant, I also attended local training exercises where I was able to see the soldiers interacting in a natural setting. This allowed me to understand better what it meant to be an infantry soldier. Observations were also made to confirm the social relationships of the infantry soldiers and the cultural climate of the unit that might prevent women's integration into such an organization.

In both settings, I found myself in conflict and holding opposing positions. The conflict that I am referring to is that of my personal identity. I am a Cadet Instructors

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Cadre (CIC) officer, a reserve officer, and I hold a commission in the CF. However, my job is one that differs greatly from the role of RNR members. My objective as a CIC officer is the training, administration and supervision of cadets. This differs from the "close in and destroy the enemy" mandate of The Royal Newfoundland Regiment infantry unit. I am very proud of my position and what I have done. I do realize, however, that the jobs differ. I know that I cannot compare my duties with those of an officer of The Regiment. Regardless, I share pride in the uniform I wear. I have heard distasteful comments and have witnessed the extreme annoyance of others when a CIC officer enters a room. I have witnessed the Regular Force degrade the Reserves and have experienced the same degradation. So, when it came to talk about who I was, I was advised not to disclose that I was a CIC officer. As a result, I continuously found myself negotiating who I was and this greatly disturbed me.

This negotiation occurred while on exercise. I was asked if I wanted combats to wear. Combats are green fatigues worn by soldiers during regular training. While this could have allowed me to integrate better with the soldiers and 'be one of them,' as an officer I could wear combats only when performing a legitimate CF role. The Department of National Defence (DND) approves the uniform, combats, and it is my privilege to wear this uniform as a commissioned officer. The dress and appearance of an officer in uniform will, on all occasions, be such as to reflect credit to the CF and is to be worn only when attending authorized parades or activities. I refused to wear it to "fit in." Further, I



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knew that if I received permission to wear the uniform from my superior, entrance to this unit as an officer of the CIC would end my research. Not only would I be distancing myself from all members of The Regiment, to wear this uniform would also draw other potential boundaries. As an officer I would be distancing myself from the non-commission members, those that are not officers. These individuals were just as important to access in my research. I could not allow any separations. I did wear combats while fulfilling the role as social scientist.

I found myself having to explain my status as an officer and could not understand why some of these soldiers could comprehend neither why I was a part of this cadre nor why I was proud to hold this status. I was training youth to become leaders, to generate interest in the CF. I could not see why my job was not important and why people would make the comments that they did. One part of me would gladly and proudly announce my affiliation to this cadre, but the other part of me was silenced in my attempt to gain access. However, I must state my feelings here. I am proud to be a CIC officer. I would wear the uniform as my uniform and I would never betray that. Despite the ambivalence regarding my personal identity as an officer, I feel that my involvement with the CIC only marginally limited my research. My sponsor, the member who largely assisted me with interviewees and gaining entrance, advised me not to reveal that information and I consented. Before I entered this institution as a researcher, a social gap already existed between myself and the subjects, as not only a CIC officer but also as a civilian, and

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despite my best efforts, I always remained somewhat apart. While I strongly believe in research being conducted openly, with knowledge and consent of those being studied, I did not think it necessary to volunteer information about my enrollment in the CIC. However, I sensed that at times, the teasing I did encounter was simply playful banter and, as someone called it, 'to take the piss out of someone.' It was a sort of ritual to see how I would react, to see if I was easy going or had a sense of humor. Other subjects, who were involved in the cadet movement themselves or who had friends that were in the CIC, were respectful and connected with me on a different level.

The reason why I decided to continue with this naturalistic observation, despite any hesitations, was to minimize my own preconceived ideas. I tried to see this world from the perspective of the members of The Royal Newfoundland Regiment, and to better understand the context within which the members operate. The types of beneficial information that I was able to learn in this role will be discussed later in this thesis, including the setting observed, the activities that took place within that setting, the people who participated in those activities and the meanings of what was observed, my interpretations, and the perspectives of those involved. The more that I went into the field and studied this unit, the more conscious I became of my own thoughts and feelings about the soldiers, the military and my development as a researcher. I discuss contradictory viewpoints and attempt to provide an understanding of what this experience gave me.

## *2.6 The Main Investigative Tool*

The core of this study rests on the semi-structured interviews (Appendix D for Semi-Structured Interview Schedule) with past and present soldiers of The RNR. A snowball sample evolved. The people I wanted to interview were not difficult to locate, but for various reasons they would not come forward. When I spoke to my respondents regarding this, they said there were concerns with anonymity. One respondent stated that, "There are things that I have said here today that make me extremely identifiable" and that, "all of these things say me and point a finger at me. And that scares the hell out of some people." There was also fear involved with possible respondents coming forward to speak with me. A female respondent stated, "A lot of the females that I have spoke to are afraid." Another reason discussed by a male respondent, was the challenges faced when trying to access a unit characterized by such tremendous loyalty. He observed, "Military people are pretty closed-minded and traditionally had a bad rapport with reporters." As a result, I made connections with members and then asked them to assist me in finding other potential interviewees. I also tried reaching out with posters. I was lucky enough to be acquainted with a very influential member of The RNR who put me in contact with other members and assisted me in getting interviews. A total of 18 interviews, with nine men and nine women, were conducted with past and present members of this unit. This sample includes those from the officer ranks and the general rank and files. It also includes those who are un-employed, employed and those who are students.

As a social researcher, I have an ethical responsibility to these respondents. The respondents were able to base their voluntary participation on an understanding of the research project. A letter of introduction was sent out to each potential respondent (see Appendix A for letter to respondents).

The respondents were asked if they had an understanding of what the subject is, the level of confidentiality in the study, and the objectives of the study before being asked to decide whether or not to participate. An interviewee consent form (see Appendix B for consent form) that ensured clarity of expectations, and fairness, was given to respondents to read and, upon deciding to participate, sign. To ensure that I did not misrepresent what the respondents told me, I tape-recorded the interview; however, they could choose not to be taped and written notes were composed instead. The respondents were told that they would have direct control over what happened to the tapes and transcripts from their interview after the thesis receives formal approval. They were also told that they could refuse to participate, withdraw at any time, or refuse to answer any particular question without consequence. Respondents were asked for permission to be telephoned if I had further questions or wished to clarify points, but were able to refuse this request without consequence.

After interviews were completed, I initially needed to identify respondents and this information was obtained with a questionnaire (see Appendix C for questionnaire). However, as soon as I finished data collection and assured myself that I no longer needed

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any further information from the respondent, I removed all identifying information. In an effort to ensure the confidentiality of answers, real names will not appear in the thesis, and pseudonyms will be used instead. I will also ensure that I tell no one of the respondents' participation in this study.

I have done my best to keep respondents' information confidential; however, I recognize that a problem remains. This study is of a small population and perhaps through discussing demographic data or certain situations, some members of the public, after considerable thought, might be able to identify respondents. I attempt to prevent this by comparing experiences of respondents with those of other men and women in aggregate. Further, the interviews were completed with the understanding that the identity of individual responses, or information which would permit identification, would not be released without their authorization. Participants were told that although confidentiality is the goal, under certain conditions the identities of certain persons and places could be recognized. Therefore, due to the small sample obtained and the issue of anonymity, neither occupation, age, nor education level, will be revealed in this study. The interview process itself was critical as it allowed me to consider the subjective effects of the social structures and boundaries in this unit, and to investigate how they interact to shape women's experiences, in addition, how women recreate these social structures and boundaries.

*Conclusion*

This chapter addresses the arguments that develop regarding women in the military. It also discusses the debate in Canadian and American literature. Each assists in constructing the framework from which the research question develops. The next chapter will outline the many themes that evolve from the research.

## Figures



**Figure 1.** Exercise “Nautical Caper” took place at the community of New Bridge, located in St. Mary’s Bay. Pictured here is the bridge that The RNR must protect.



**Figure 2.** 56 Field Engineers Squadron provided support for the exercise. Pictured here is a soldier wiring the bridge.



**Figure 3.** The first night I was brought to the command post. This is one of the soldiers that made me welcome.



**Figure 4.** A soldier cooking IMP's on a Coleman stove.



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**Figure 5.** The Commanding Officer delivers instructions to a soldier.



**Figure 6.** I speak with a section commander from one platoon.



**Figure 7.** I eat my IMP dinner, beef vegetable stew.



**Figure 8.** After completing the 7-km ruck march I get ready to put my ruck on the ML truck with the other soldiers.

### Chapter 3: Emergence of Themes in the Context of Theory

#### *Introduction*

The current project takes a grounded theory approach to sociological investigation, one that generates concepts and categories that help explain the particular social actions of members of The Royal Newfoundland Regiment during the research itself. The categories that have been grounded in the data, which will be elaborated on in the thesis, will be introduced here.

We are all aware of social change. In 1989, combat trades were opened to women. In 2001, women were allowed in the submarine service. In the context of the social change taking place in the Canadian military, the research upon which this analysis is based has been influenced by feminist theory. It is helpful to discuss feminist sociology, which may be broadly defined as “one *of* women from their standpoint and *for* women in the political sense of change” (Teevan and Hewitt, 1998, p. 11). More specifically, feminists generally see “social institutions and social attitudes as the basis for women’s positions in society,” and further, because “these institutions have created structured inequities between women and men, feminists believe in transforming institutions to generate liberating social changes on behalf of women” (Anderson, 1993, p. 7). Along with a focus on women, feminist sociology also attempts to raise awareness, which is an ultimate goal of this thesis. Awareness of gender issues hopefully will result in more research dedicated to the topic, as well as promoting social change.

However, the analysis of much of the research is guided by Max Weber’s theory

of social action. Weber argues that ideas and values are crucial in shaping human action and can thereby bring about change. As a researcher, I attempt to obtain a deeper insight into the actions of people in The Royal Newfoundland Regiment, actions that are grounded mainly in what Weber calls rational activity but continue to be affected by what Weber calls traditional and non-rational activity (Runciman, 1978, p. 25-32).

Weber's concepts are useful as a general theoretical approach. He claimed that sociology aims to understand the meaning of actions. Applicable to current research is the continuing claim that rationalization, the process whereby every area of human relationships is subject to calculation and administration, is present in all social spheres (Runciman, 1978, p. 28).

### *3. 1 Grounded Theory Research*

Guided by a set of concepts to provide a theoretical explanation of the specific social phenomena under study, this research attempts to explain as well as describe. The questions about women's military experience began before the commencement of my research study. The literature review allowed me to begin formulating the central research question. Comparative analysis was used conjointly with the literature review as I compared various other studies with the present research. An analysis of documents, as well as discussion with those already involved in various areas of military research, assisted in the questions investigated being produced and reformulated time after time. The central research question invoked a need to know more about this institution where women are participants.

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An ideal method to develop an understanding of the social system in question is participant observation. This was done in combination with interviews, which became the main investigative tool. However, my presence in the field allowed first-hand observation of certain themes present during interviews. Both methods allowed me to incorporate relevant issues into the next interview and so on. Each method complements the other and guides the research.

In the beginning of the research project I decided to interview only women, but, as the research proceeded, I realized that I should include men in my sample as well. As a result of the unfolding data I decided to include male officers and ex-members of The Royal Newfoundland Regiment. A key aspect of grounded theory is that new data continuously modify and reformulate the direction of the research.

In this thesis, grounded theory is presented in a running theoretical discussion, using different conceptual categories. The categories that emerged are “coping strategies,” “language dominance,” “instruments of denial,” “instruments of sexual power,” “formal strategies,” and “teamwork.” In identifying these different categories the data were continually inspected for new properties and the use of memos was employed. Although each line of each interview was not codified, because such detailed coding would have proven to be too cumbersome, I did adopt other methods of memo writing that proved to be very useful. Theoretical memos were used in the form of a field notebook. In this notebook regular, in-depth notes were kept as I examined each interview and event in sequence. This was done in combination with numerous marginal notes on the transcripts

of the interviews.

As a result of these methods, initial ideas were transformed into relevant concepts and categories, each remaining connected with the central research question that guided the study. These concepts and categories inform the analysis of the succeeding chapters. Throughout the data analysis different terms were applied to different concepts. It is helpful to identify these now. Terms that appear throughout this research include “social structures” and “boundaries.” “Social structures” refer to the way in which a society, in this case the military, is organized into relationships. A discussion of these relationships as revealed by the findings sheds light on how women become involved in such relationships. Women enter occupations, but social structures define how they do it. When discussing boundaries everyday language would refer to lines marking the limits of an area. Talcott Parsons interprets boundaries as important to a social system. Parsons defines a social system as boundary-maintaining if, in relation to its environment, it preserves certain regularities of patterns. In this research, “boundaries” that will be discussed refer to restrictions and actions that mark limits to women’s integration (Abercrombie et al., 1984, p. 36). Social processes, as defined by the themes that emerge, such as sexual innuendos, maintain boundaries that characterize the military environment.

While some may claim that grounded theory ideally insist that theory should be generated only in the context of current research, this ideal is rarely achieved in practice and is, in fact, a naive understanding of grounded theory and in particular, the use of theory and literature in data analysis. In its general orientation, the research reported on

here has also been influenced by Weber's theory of social action. It has also been influenced by feminist theory which brings attention to such issues as the nature versus nurture debate and varying perspectives on gender relations. The inclusion of feminist theory is essential as the central research question aim is to understand and explain women's position as they experience the military culture of The Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

Feminist social theory has had an impact on sociology in terms of the conceptualization of sex and gender. Gender is one of the major dimensions of social inequality and is a common theme for discussion throughout this study. As women enter the military they defy a male-dominant culture. Women face those who are unwilling to accept change and who engage in social action aimed at maintaining the social inequality of the sexes. This unwillingness results in the generation of a category identified as "coping strategies." Even though women have entered the military recently, it must be borne in mind that, historically, it has been a male preserve<sup>0</sup>. The pervasive male culture that was consolidated over many years continues to permeate the organization. Throughout the research, it becomes clear that many social structures and boundaries are inhibiting the successful integration of women. This provokes questions and pushes the study to explain the behaviour in question. It also leads to further consideration of how society assigns particular social roles to people depending on their gender.

When children are born, they are either male or female. Children's biological sex ought not to make a great deal of difference in how they are raised, but then there is

socialization. The sex of a person is biologically determined, but the gender of a person is culturally and socially constructed. There are thus two sexes (male and female) and two genders (masculine and feminine). As a result, there is a cultural specificity of notions about gender, resulting in gender stereotypes and presumed sex-roles.

While there seems to have been a slight shift, boys are still given different toys or even everyday items than girls, "Male babies are given blue blankets, while females get pink ones" (Schaefer et al., 1996, p. 207). Boys receive blocks, trucks, and tool kits; girls are given dolls, dress-up clothes and make-up. Boys are also expected to take on a masculine persona, one that is active, aggressive, tough, daring - whereas girls must be feminine - timid, submissive, emotional (Schaefer et al., 1996, p. 207).

Further, when considering physical differences in men and women we must again give consideration to sex and gender, and the theory of nature versus nurture. As stated earlier, sex refers to ascribed characteristics, and with very few exceptions, humans are born male or female. Sex is determined, not chosen. By contrast, gender is an *achieved* characteristic and refers to the social expectations that are developed and placed upon individuals on the basis of their biological sex. In most cultures, there are different expectations for males and females.

The debate about gendered order emphasizes two different extremes, nature and nurture. According to the nature theory, genetics explains why men and women are different. Sex determines gender; we are born that way and how we act is determined by it. By contrast, the nurture theory insists that one must consider all the environmental



conditions to which one is subject. Each aspect of behaviour is acquired from the environment (Anderson, 1993, p. 31). The debate can be illustrated by the following question: Do people play football because their mother or father gave them a football or because of biological programming? In recent years, we have seen girls engage in more rigorous activities such as soccer and even boxing. However, while the sports boys and girls participate are changing, the typical scene still find parents and daughters watching their son/brother at play - racing, catching, playing ball. If the daughters aren't watching their brothers at play, they are playing with their Barbie dolls. One need only to turn to the Sears Christmas catalog toy section to witness the gender discrepancy that still prevails.

The differential treatment that follows from this polarity of the masculine and the feminine is enforced by gender expectations. Gender expectations are anticipations, varying among cultures, specifying appropriate behaviours for males and females, including a heterosexual assumption that sex between males and females is the only acceptable form of sex (Anderson, 1993 p. 32). The toys they play with, the clothes they wear and/ or the songs they are sung, can shape their gender identity. Gender identity is also formed through various institutions, such as family, church and mass media. With each identity, masculine or feminine, there are traditional associated characteristics. Traditionally, masculinity entails characteristics such as fearlessness, invulnerability, and toughness. Femininity includes shyness, politeness and being soft-spoken. Even the names chosen for boys and girls are marked with gender expectations. It is presumed that

“girls’ names are supposed to be feminine - soft, pretty, and symbolic of goodness, sweetness, and beauty; boys’ names are supposed to be masculine - short; harder in tone; and symbolic of strength, determination and intellect” (Anderson, 1993, p. 30). Due to this identity a person is assigned gender roles - the expectations of society regarding the proper behaviour and attitudes of males and females. These expectations permeate many decisions, such as the occupation that someone chooses. If a woman chooses to enter an occupation traditionally reserved for men, this has implications for both women and men as well as for the culture of the organization. The military is a quintessentially male institution, especially the infantry, which makes it an especially fruitful area in which to examine how this plays out in practice. The infantry is a unit of human beings trained to kill other human beings. These people in the military, therefore, has to condition other people to become capable of taking lives. Soldiers are everything that has traditionally been thought of as “masculine.” The infantry must be more aggressive than the average soldier. This aggression is an essential consideration as women enter the military. Therefore, it is further investigated throughout this research study.

There was much attention drawn to the terminology used in the institution. “Language dominance” was observed in both the interviews and through participant observation at events. Even when both men and women are present, the tendency is to refer to the group in male-defined terms such as “guys.” The impact of this is subtle but important. Males who do not conform to the cultural image of the male gender role, as reinforced by this institution, face criticism and even humiliation. They are called names

such as “sissy” or “pussy.” One way to insult a man is to call him feminine names. This occurs even when male and female soldiers are training and living together, and are supposed to be a team.

A recurring theme throughout the interviews revolved around the contention that the physical inferiority of women would make them liabilities rather than assets in combat. This developed into a category called “instruments of denial.” This assumed inferior physical ability of women in activities such as lifting and carrying is often cited as the reason women cannot meet the demands of ground combat. Therefore, the argument insists women’s presence impedes military efficiency.

Included in this category are many concepts regarding the body. The physical characteristics of the body must be examined more closely than merely the actual predetermined biology. It seems clear that, if a person cannot pass the minimum physical strength test required for a program, then they can’t enter the program. If most men are stronger than most women, then more men will likely be in more physically demanding jobs. The question of the construction of the male body as strong is one to be explored in terms of reflection on the historical influences on the soldier’s body. Gender influences sex just as sex influences gender. There is no rational or justifiable reason to exclude those women who can meet the required physical standard. Nor is it a reason to lower standards so that more women can be included. However, this is an issue that has repeatedly surfaced and, as a result, has generated a need to elaborate on these concepts for this research.

Again, while grounded theory insists that theory should be generated only in the context of current research, it must be acknowledged that this research has also been influenced by theory discussing the female body. In theorizing the female soldier's body, Lynda Birke states that the body becomes "central to understanding women's experience." Not only does the body produce stereotypes, but these stereotypes help produce the body and its meaning. Moreover, within this exploration the "body is not given, but is both signifying and signified, historically contingent and social" (1999, p. 43).

Historically, one of the most important considerations associated with women's utilization in the military was the effectiveness of their physical performance in active duty. There are several issues raised by the current literature related to the female soldier's body, such as meeting physical standards, anticipated problems of Pre-Menstrual Syndrome (PMS) and menstruation, and pregnancy. These in turn are used to raise questions about the supposed need to protect women from harm, and their psychological ability to handle stress. Within the present research the themes that emerged surrounding the female body concerned physical ability and menstruation. As I pursued my exploration of these biological themes, it became clear that one must also view the body as a "social and discursive object, a body bound up in the order of desire, signification and power," and therefore explore how the female soldier's body has been constructed in military discourse (Birke, 1999, p. 43).

### 3.2 *Theories of the Body*

The preconceived physical inferiority of women's bodies must be examined more closely than merely the actual biology. According to feminist theory, the body, has its own agency; it is not merely a body, but rather, it has the ability to be "self-organizing" and "social constructions and experiences of gender can themselves be part of a process" (Birke, 1999, p.47). The body and gender work conjointly. The body is not completely material but is influenced by the social and cultural as well. Different practices, such as giving boys toys like G.I. Joe, Tonka trucks or play guns promote active, aggressive play. This is in clear opposition to the toys that girls are traditionally given like Cabbage Patch Kids, Barbie dolls and tea sets which instill passivity and quiet play. Further, these toys spark a different twist to consider. The toys are culturally available symbols that invoke "multiple representations" of women (Scott, 1996, p. 43). In addition to other methods of representing women and men, normative concepts signify different impressions of women by society. Barbie implies passivity and beauty, rather than the aggressive image that G.I. Joe reflects. Ultimately, the toy and play contribute to the construction of the person who might be seen with no place in the United States or Canadian military. Moreover, it is important to consider not only the physical body, but how it is constructed by, and how it constructs, gender. The giving of specific toys to males and females acts in ways to *create* the female soldier's body. As previously stated, Barbie dolls are already gendered despite the sex of the person it is given to. Barbie dolls and tea sets promote quiet play, producing a person as submissive and nurturing. This would differ from G.I.

Joe and blocks that promote active play, producing a person who is kinetic and assertive. Toys are a part of the socialization process and the transmission of practices, this play, throughout generations, must also be considered.

An instance refuting the argument that women are physically inferior occurred in August 1991, when Second Lieutenant Procter and Brown-Melanka graduated from the Gagetown artillery school in New Brunswick. Both service women said they gave the training their greatest effort. Aspects of the training consisted of mock battles, lasting four days, and five-day marches in snow shoes in sub-zero conditions, hauling toboggans. The only physical difference that they noticed between themselves and the men is that they dehydrated more quickly - which often means women are more prone to urinary-tract diseases than men - easily solved by ensuring that they regularly filled their water bottles (Muir, 1992, p.77). Such considerations of gender are essential when discussing women's integration. These debates anchor gender discrimination. Examining them will dissolve them. Arguments aside, the reality is that women are allowed in combat units.

Other countries, including Belgium, Denmark and Norway, have successfully integrated men and women into front-line fighting units; Spain and Portugal are in the early stages of recruiting women for newly opened combat jobs (Muir, 1992, p. 74). But Canada, with 86,000 troops, is the largest country to test women in combat, and training has begun in the infantry, artillery and armored corps, as well as on fighter jets and warships (Muir, 1992, p.74). The physical standards were not altered at all to accommodate women, although gender differences in physical training were allowed at

the recruitment stage.

With such headway it is puzzling why some attitudes remain resistant to women's actual capabilities. Throughout this research, I encountered some people in the military who maintain negative attitudes toward women. Perhaps it is due to outmoded cultural views on the proper roles of each sex, not to any rational objections. Perhaps how men and women are treated within the military are by-products of military thinking and a need to have an external enemy, a distinctive, contrasting "other." Is this a need that is tied to an essential human nature always cognizant of sex? That is, "is the centrality of being male or female so firmly imprinted that oppositeness, otherness, controls all our thinking unless we make a supreme effort to enlarge our categories?" (Stiehm, 1989, p. 241).

There seems to be a continued focus, when discussing the female body, on the socially constructed role of women, on physical weakness, and menstruation. That these reasons are used repeatedly to differentiate men and women lead to a discussion of the need to ascribe "agency and transformativity to organisms/bodies" (Stiehm, 1989, p. 245). This social construction of the bodies can be changed (it is not innate). This helps work against "the social devaluation of the body and its interior and will contribute to eradicating women's (and others') oppressions" (Stiehm, 1989, p. 246). Not only is the body thought of in physical and/or medical contexts, it must also be thought of in holistic terms.

Holistic means that the body has agency, the body consists of both the physical body and the spiritual mind. "Moreover, this [holistic perspective] will work against simple dichotomous classifications of mind/self versus body" that seem to be an insistence of the

language society uses. In the military, moreover, in women's history, there is more than biology (Parr, 1996, p. 14). There is a collaboration of several forces, such as the hierarchical social, economic, and political contexts, that are used to create a discourse (1996, p. 14).

An awareness of this theme can institute new knowledge that allows women and men to transcend these constructed dualisms. Historically, the military has made use of the dichotomy of male/ rational/ mind versus the female/ irrational/ body. These discourses have been used to inform the argument made by the military regarding women's participation in combat, while excluding the context of the body. A holistic approach is necessary when considering the development of women, to integrate the physical, mental and social context, as well as the role of language to create possible ways of being.

Gender can be seen and used as a "primary way of signifying relationships of power" (Scott, 1996, p.44). It is only through investigating such claims empirically, as in the present research, that one can refute them, thus discrediting the construction of male and female in specific contexts such as the military organization.

### *3.3 Themes and Theory*

The concerns, thoughts and experiences of both the women and men echoed the sentiments previously discussed, and continued to feed the sociologist's need to know more about this social phenomenon in light of these debates. Various categories related to broader themes have also been generated to explain the behaviour investigated. For



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example, in chapter 5, the category that evolved is “instruments of sexual power.” Several concepts evolved that were prominent throughout all interviews and events. Males are expected to conform to expectations placed on them by society and risk humiliation if they do not. Within the military, a male culture persists. This is a culture where men have to be even more masculine, more macho than in civilian life. A part of being male is fearlessness, where they are the conquerors or the victors. This also means men dominating over women. Masculinity, as described here, is acquired through power and achievement. It is also achieved through machismo and sexual prowess. Talk that eludes this machismo and sexual prowess is still common in The Royal Newfoundland Regiment. It not only brings men together but also makes women very uncomfortable. It can be seen as a tool used to exclude women. Men in the military maintain power over women in many different ways and at many different levels. The subtle sexism that is commonplace escalates at times into more overt problems, such as harassment.

Another category I address is “formal strategies.” This pertains to the thorny issue of harassment within the military. The problem not only lies in the formal policies, but within the entire structure and background of this historically exclusive institution.

The different concepts discussed within each category appeared repeatedly in interviews and observations. Each category is connected and many appear as strategies to hinder the integration of women in the military. However, there is also an undertone that demonstrates that change is beginning to occur. It is evident that some soldiers are working together. Teamwork is present. “Teamwork” has become has become an

alternative category that substantiates the success of women's integration. After a careful consideration of the categories and concepts, this thesis attempts to answer many of the questions that emerge from the data, and to describe and explain the social phenomena in question.

This thesis describes the social action of the soldiers of The Royal Newfoundland Regiment. In keeping with Weber's theory, it also identifies unintended social consequences on unforeseen effects, arising out of deliberate activities, however independent of the actors' intentions. As a sociologist I have attempted to provide explanations for the behaviour performed by both the respondents and the other actors involved. This is similar to Weber who "sought to grasp the variety of human conduct under different social and cultural conditions, to attempt an understanding of their meaning from within human social experience, and to provide an explanation from the point of view of the detached observer" (Heydebrand, 1994, p. ix). In this instance, the actors are men and women in a military environment. Some of these actors, or soldiers, are reacting to the new presence of women in various modes of behaviour, each rationalized differently. Rationality is a key word used throughout Weber's writing's and refers to how someone assesses their actions. Consequently, the imputed rational thought processes and assignment of meaning driving the actions of those involved is examined.

Throughout this research, respondents discuss and describe many different situations they encountered throughout their military careers. It is helpful to discuss the military, and the actions it engages in, as the organization attempts to produce change.

Socialization continues throughout one's life. However, once someone enters the military they experience "re-socialization" in very specific ways. The military is considered a total institution, a term coined by Erving Goffman. It refers to an institution that regulates "all aspects of a person's life under a single authority" (Schaefer et al., 1994, p. 64). During basic training the recruit is told everything: when to get up in the morning, what to wear, how to pack their kit, how to make their beds and so forth. They must march in formation wherever they are told to go, and they must carry out drill movements in unison, as one unit. A recruit becomes stripped of old beliefs as they now serve the purpose of the organization. A person on the street may have held such values as not to take another life, however, the military must strip their members of such beliefs. In times of war, a soldier may be called upon to exterminate another human's life. Interestingly, this may be linked with the obscene language used. While these soldiers may not curse much in their civilian life, cursing is considered a part of the culture of this institution. This was discussed in interviews and was also experienced during events. As a social scientist I found myself, after participating in a military exercise, returning to my civilian life cursing profusely because it was such a normal phenomenon during this military exercise.

Understanding that the military is a total institution is helpful when considering social action engaged in by the soldiers. According to Weber's theory of social action, any kind of action may be rationalized in terms of traditional behaviour affectively determined, rational in employing appropriate means to a given end, or rational in an attempt to realise some absolute value (Runciman, 1978, p. 28). Traditional behaviour is

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everyday activity. For example, in the military a soldier is expected to wake up at 0600h, participate in a physical training session, conduct personal hygiene and attend the breakfast meal. These are settled customs. This behaviour is not usually considered social action because it is not in relation to someone else's behaviour. Behaviour that is affectively determined is usually a "result of current emotional impulses and states of feelings, without giving thought to consequences" (Runciman, 1978, p. 28). An example of this will be discussed more deeply later in the thesis when considering an incident that occurred on the training exercise called Nautical Caper. During this time some soldiers of the unit were performing poorly during a route march. An officer, clearly unhappy with this performance, addressed his troops, both male and female, as "Ladies." At a later time, he admitted that this was said in an attempt to encourage his troops to do better, and while it was not the best choice of words, he was angry and upset at the performance. Therefore, had the officer stopped and considered the situation rationally so as to achieve better performance, rather than reacting on pure emotion to the situation, he might have behaved differently.

According to Weber, the remaining types of social action are more common. Rational behaviour, in employing appropriate means to a given end, would entail an officer regarding his troops, both men and women, as having valuable contributions to make to the organization, and would consider how to obtain the best results from the soldiers in order to better the unit. Lastly, rational behaviour can involve an "attempt to realise some absolute, or intrinsic, value of a particular sort of behaviour, purely for its

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own sake regardless of consequences" (Runciman, 1978, p. 29). This is not evident in the current research but a common example would be a person who may chain themselves to a tree in protest. While such action is intrinsically meaningful, it does not change anything that is happening.

To consider the military in light of Weber's idea about rational social action, one could say this organization "rationally" engages in "traditional" behaviour. It prides itself on tradition and customs unique to not only the military but to each specific trade. An example of this would be upon promotion of rank, the person promoted would be expected to buy everyone a round of drinks at the mess. Another example would be if a soldier or officer walked into their mess without removing their head dress, they would be expected to purchase drinks for everyone present. While not a written rule, it is an accepted custom.

The military is an organization based on traditional behaviour, however, it is slowly adjusting to new rules and regulations. These new rules include allowing women entrance to combat trades. Some men may show no reaction to this rule and may be indifferent to this new stimulus - the women. However, some men may react positively to this rule, regarding a positive addition (women) to the organization. This behaviour is instrumentally rational, a means to an end, where soldiers realize the value of both men and women to the unit. However, others in the military are still being influenced by old behaviour. This will be shown when the category of "instruments of denial" is discussed. While some believe that women are not physically as fit as men, others maintain that both

sexes have varying levels of fitness and focus on intelligence as an important characteristic of a soldier.

Some men do react negatively to women, to this new part of the equation. They react with what Weber would call affectively rationalized behaviour. While rules may attempt to change the institution and those within, irrational behaviour remains as many people are still influenced by past opinions. This behaviour is discussed throughout all aspects of the research and throughout all categories. To claim that behaviour is affectively determined is to claim that people are reacting emotionally, without rational thought. An example would be claiming that women are not as fit as men without giving consideration to the evidence of past performance, or research conducted. Another example is discussed in the category, "instruments of sexual power," when respondents claim that women enter the military to engage in sexual relations. This is not based on actual research or formal inquiries, but is a result of conflicting emotional thoughts about women guided by irrational behaviour.

The behaviour that negatively influences women's experiences results in conflict between those partaking in such action and those for whom the social action is identified as meaningful. The tradition and culture of the military order have allowed those involved to maintain authority and control, with a sense of comfort in what is known and accepted. Those that react adversely to women may be attempting to maintain control over a situation where they no longer have control. The conflict is explained as "competition, insofar as it consists in a formally peaceful attempt to attain control over opportunities

and advantages which are also desired by others” (Heydebrand, 1994, p. 13).

At the same time, there is another underlying theme present throughout the research. This theme is teamwork, and it is the key to women successfully integrating in the military. If this action becomes seen rationally as a means to a given end, then the value of women and men working conjointly will be appreciated. Maintaining this approach, the social action that hinders women's integration will be eliminated. As discussed by Weber, “one type of action has, in the course of time, been displaced by another, whether it is action by the same persons or by others” (Heydebrand, 1994, p. 15).

An effort is being made by the military to assist in the elimination of social action that undermines women's integration. The implementation of harassment policies and such training as Standard for Harassment and Racism Prevention (SHARP) aim to eliminate adverse behaviour. This accords with Weber's concept of human action “consciously aimed to alter certain social relationships or directed to the prevention of their development or continuance” (Heydebrand, 1994, p. 15). In other words, the military has initiated such policies to send a message to those members who continue to allow their behaviour to be affectively determined. For example, sexist comments will be suppressed due to the training in place and possible repercussions of the policies.

Interestingly, before women entered this organization, one might have thought that men would limit sex talk to only men. Perhaps this was so. However, now that women are involved in the military, men no longer limit their sexual banter to when women are absent. They have modified this behaviour, and now continue to discuss

sexual relations in the presence of women. This change in behaviour can be interpreted as in defiance of the women's new behaviour, almost in spite of it. This issue of sexual banter will be discussed more under the category "instruments of sexual power." Perhaps we are witnessing a new kind of harassment. Such modified behaviour can be considered an example of what Weber called an unintended or unanticipated consequence of social action. Even the new action itself can be considered unintended. This unintended social action will in turn affect certain types of social relationships which may be "adversely affected in their opportunities to maintain themselves" (Heydebrand, 1994, p. 15).

Another concept discussed by Weber is that of communal relationships. A recurring theme that emerged throughout the interviews is that of teamwork and morale. The feelings of togetherness and belonging were also perceived during participant observation. Togetherness was illustrated by the encouragement of fellow soldiers during hikes and the cooperation displayed when executing manoeuvres. Even the simple act of helping fellow soldiers retrieve their water canteens during a resting period on the hike were an important to be part of the team. The laughter and camaraderie was evident and is present throughout The Royal Newfoundland Regiment. This feeling of belonging is discussed at length in most interviews. Despite any problems that may be encountered throughout training, it is this communal relationship that prevails and maintains morale.

Communal relationships, as defined by Weber, are based on a "subjective feeling of the parties, whether affectual or traditional, that they belong together" (Heydebrand, 1994, p. 16). Military esprit de corps is an excellent example of Weber's concept. As



women become part of a unit, they may be included (or excluded) because of tradition. The affectual feeling of belonging is notably different for women. However, it is also important to note that even though these social relationships can develop and last for long periods, there may also be coercion present if one party is weaker than the other (Heydebrand, 1994, p. 17). This can be illustrated by those who experience the sense of belonging, but yet allow themselves to be influenced by affectual or irrational behaviour.

Another useful distinction that Weber makes is between open versus closed social relationships. Open social relationships allow other actors to participate in the social action. However, a closed social relationship does not allow other actors to participate. It is "limited or subjected to conditions" (Heydebrand, 1994, p. 19). Whether a relationship is open or closed maybe be determined traditionally, affectively, or rationally in terms of values or of expediency. In a military unit, traditional social action dictates that each and every member of a unit is part of the team despite any personal problems or negative social relationships that might be present. It is those social relationships motivated by affective rational behaviour that maintains the true feeling of belonging. However, in principle, all soldiers are part of the communal relationship, but, to the extent to which the social relationship may be closed to women and open to men only, women feel unable to gain entrance as they are left on the periphery. Throughout the research, however, it is evident that some soldiers see the entrance of women in the military as strengthening resources and leading to improvements. These soldiers will keep the social relationship open, and enable the successful integration of women into the military.

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While Weber does not address the face-to-face interactions of actors directly, the current research does. It shows that it is important to consider the values and beliefs of the soldiers when attempting to foster social change. Negative relationships and experiences will persist until the military's traditions and values are redefined. This will require a shift in social action.

### *Conclusion*

The current project takes a grounded theory approach to sociological investigation, within a wider theoretical perspective drawing on ideas from both Max Weber and feminist theory. From the data collected, different concepts and categories have been generated. These categories attempt to explain particular social actions of members of The Royal Newfoundland Regiment during the period of research. I say "attempt," because the research evokes more questions than answers. I ended the research phase because I thought I had enough data to cover the topic, and the desire to begin writing was strong. I quickly found out, however, that the more you learn, the more you realize that there are areas that you don't know about. While I am content with the research, my sociological imagination has taken off. It is time to allow the data to speak for themselves.

Chapter 4: To Be an Infantry Soldier and "Fitting In"

There are some guys that resent the girls being there because they don't feel that they can do the job. They don't feel the infantry is a woman's thing, you know? Women should be clerks or something like that you know. So you've got those guys and they treat the girls differently, and then you have the ones who will treat them exactly the same as the guys so it's kind of divided. - Tracy

*Introduction*

When people become soldiers in the Canadian Forces (CF) they are entering an institution of rules, regulations and high discipline. Since 1989, women have entered the military in all capacities, including the combat arms. To contemplate the integration progress, it is necessary first to reconsider gender - the meanings we assign to the terms *male* and *female* - as well as the gender stereotypes. These stereotypes evolve from differential power relationships between men and women in very specific ways in the military. Women challenge these stereotypes when they enter this male occupation. Then attention will be given to the distinct role of the infantry, maintaining a focus on the male ideology from which this institution evolves. It is argued that from this male ideology an attitude of antifemininity develops (Basow, 1992, p. 6). This antifemininity is evident when considering the physical fitness entrance requirements, which expects women to conform to a male standard. When paying attention to terminology, women are again forgotten. The prevailing belief is that the infantry remains a male domain.

*4.1 Fitting in as an Infantry Soldier in the Army.*

Women have been pushing social boundaries for quite some time. They have been entering the job market with a zest for positions that have traditionally been male-dominated. Historically, women's work outside the home was mainly in low status occupations. However, women's employment trends have begun to change and there has been a crossover between typical men's work and women's work. Women are no longer confined to being secretaries or waitresses. No longer is it unheard of for women to work as construction workers or fire fighters. Women are pushing occupational boundaries and they are succeeding.

Gender stereotypes construct these boundaries. These boundaries are constructed by expectations and assumptions based on gender and ultimately result in complex gender stereotypes. Interestingly, there are subtypes of both female and male stereotypes (Basow, 1992, p. 6). For women, there are at least three distinct stereotypes: the housewife (the traditional woman), the professional woman (independent, ambitious and self-confident), and the Playboy bunny (sex object) (1992, p. 6). Often these stereotypes are seen to overlap. While a woman may be seen as a professional, at the same time she may be viewed as a sex object. While subtypes of the male stereotype are less clear, the traditional male stereotype comprises three factors. These factors are: status (the need to achieve success and others' respect), toughness (strength and self-reliance) and antifemininity (avoidance of stereotypically feminine activities) (1992, p. 6).

Women challenge these stereotypes as they enter occupations traditionally

reserved for men, such as engineering. For women who persevere, studies of engineering suggest that a gender imbalance is present and is “attributable to stereotyped expectations about who should participate in science and engineering” (Eisenhart and Finkel, 1998, p. 5). It is further argued that the pattern of women’s under-representation in elite science or engineering is a reproduction of women’s subordinate status through subtle and not-so-subtle pressures and barriers that exclude women (1998, p. 39). This is expanded on in a similar example given by Jennifer Pierce, in her book, *Gender Trials: Emotional Lives in Contemporary Law Firms* (1995) (Eisenhart and Finkel, 1998, p. 5). In one law firm, women were expected to act as the aggressive litigator, but, to be considered women, they had to be nice. Regardless of their strategy, however, they could never “measure up to the male-orientated standard for both “good litigator” and “woman” ” (1998, p. 41). In a further attempt to keep women on the margins, men used “sexual harassment and traditionally male activities (e.g., drinking competitions, golf weekends)” (1998, p. 41). Therefore, in both engineering and law, the meaning of being a woman reduces professional prestige. Women continue to persevere and challenge such practices. Nevertheless, what about women who enter the traditionally all-male occupation designed to kill?

In Canada, women join the military in all capacities, including the infantry. Although women in the military is not a new concept, women entering combat trades continue to raise eyebrows. This is an arena that embraces not only all that is male, but everything that is male, including the factors previously discussed: status, toughness and

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antifemininity or an avoidance toward of all things stereotypically feminine. These factors are deep in the ideology of this institution. As a result, the military specifically rejects women and femininity in all its forms. This raises many questions about what it means to be a woman in the army, or more specifically, to be an infantry soldier.

Infantry soldiers are different from other members of the CF because they have to be. Their role is unique; to close in and destroy the enemy by day or by night, regardless of season, weather or terrain. That is the role of the infantry. What kind of person does it take to be infantry? If someone from the civilian world attempts to become a soldier, attitudes of aggression must replace those of kindness and respect toward their fellow human beings. They must be aggressive enough to kill another human being. Matthew, a previous member of the unit who has transferred to another branch, echoes this reconditioning, "you go in off the street and they teach you to be aggressive...the closer you get to the infantry the more aggressive you have to be because it is either kill or be killed." To further clarify this set of morals, the following is a poem which was given to me to help me understand the unique nature of the infantry. In this poem are several themes of violence, aggression, arrogance, but also, pride and high self-respect.

The poem is simply called 'Soldier' and it reads:

I was that what others did not want to be.  
I went where others feared to go, and did what others failed to do.  
I asked nothing from those who gave nothing, and reluctantly  
accepted the thought of eternal loneliness should I fail.  
I have seen the face of terror; felt the stinging cold of fear; and  
enjoyed the sweet taste of a moment's love.  
I have cried, pained, and hoped...but most of all, I have lived times  
others would say were best forgotten.  
At least someday I will be able to say that I was proud of what I  
was...a soldier.

(Major Ereaut, personal communication, October 16, 2001).

Infantry soldiers are indeed distinct. They go places no one else want to go. They are on the front lines. They are the ones who must kill or be killed up close and personal. They not only kill, but they are put in situations where they can see the faces of their enemies. The infantry soldier, as I quickly discovered, has no comforts. They are a different breed. These are people that walk or run to their destination, carrying a weapon and wearing a helmet, with a 40-pound rucksack on their back. They go regardless of the weather, and when they can, they steal sleep, even if it means lying in the mud. Ken sums this up well by saying, "Infantrymen go into the field and literally they live in a hole...the infantry is a hardship. There is no getting around that. You can turn off your brain a bit...there is a saying that only a soldier knows the cold. Only a soldier knows hunger. Only a soldier knows exhaustion, and when you're out there you believe that you are the only person who knows it." To believe that you are the only person who knows discomfort could provide an explanation of the infantry mentality of thinking of

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themselves as the best, and may account for how tough one must be in order to become an infantry soldier, also a gendered expectation. There are no comforts for the infantry soldier. But how does one develop the toughness necessary to be an infantry soldier?

An example of training to achieve this toughness can be found in the popular movie, "Full Metal Jacket" (Kubrick, 1987). At the beginning of the movie you witness the rigours of basic training and the super macho attitude that prevails in this institution. One scene shows the new recruits lined up waiting to commence training. Drill sergeant Hartman decides to speak to a new recruit whom he has decided to nickname Joker. Hartman yells at him, "Well ... no shit. What have we got here, a fucking comedian? Private Joker? I admire your honesty. Hell, I like you. You can come over to my house and fuck my sister." The drill sergeant then punches the new recruit Joker in the stomach. Joker sags to his knees. Hartman then continues to shout, "You little scumbag! I've got your name! I've got your ass! You will not laugh! You will not cry! You will learn by the numbers. I will teach you. Now get up! Get on your feet! You had best unfuck yourself or I will unscrew your head and shit down your neck!" The drill sergeant speaks of his sister as a sexual object to share, and assumes the men are heterosexual. The drill sergeant owns the recruits. He is the one who will teach them how to become a soldier, he owns them and he will break them down and build them up. The key here is intimidation. The drill sergeant will teach you how to become a soldier or else. Is this intimidation, this yelling, a useful tool to develop soldiers? In the past it was a tool to solely train male soldiers. It is questionable if the same mechanism for training men will be effective for



training women.

Tracy, a past member of The Regiment, remembers when she first went away to basic training, "This bus pulls up and this guy who...like...he was 300lbs and 7 ft tall, he looked like something like a marine, or from the Platoon movie....Then I was like....I thought about going home." Intimidation tactics are not a new phenomenon. Yelling is a part of these tactics. It is manifested within the entire military institution. Soldiers are yelled at to hurry up, to get up, to get their kit, to shut up, to stand straight, to sit up, and to sit down. Why is there so much shouting and swearing? The prevailing notion is that military recruits have to be broken down and then built back up.

The military requires soldiers to have a certain character; a soldier must learn to react quickly. Samantha remembers a training experience, "I know that it isn't because buddy hates me, it is because he is bringing up the standard and gives you a high regime on course. If he asks you to do something, you don't stop to think about it, you do it. You're not paid to ask questions or to think. You do what you're told." The soldiers must react to orders. They are steadfast, and are physically and mentally hard. As Jonah, currently a student, explains, "The job demands mental toughness, also physical toughness like putting up with the cold." The army wants its soldiers to have a certain character with certain beliefs; the infantry, in particular, needs its soldiers to be ready to kill in any environment or put themselves in harm's way. But again, how does one become tough enough?

To be tough, one must be everything that encompasses the stereotype of the

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“male.” To be in the infantry one must be even more male. What does it mean to be tougher or “more male?” As discussed earlier, according to our cultural assumptions, to be male is to be aggressive, assertive, dominant, and macho. But what does macho mean? Machismo compliments men for their virility and promotes a sense of pride in themselves as males. Lorne speculates that, “To me it is all that is good about being a man. Macho is what makes me enjoy my truck when my wife can’t stand it and thinks it’s a shit box. But I love that...truck. That’s my machismo, making me love that truck.” It seems that there is a dichotomy. On one end, we have machismo, in Lorne’s case it is his love for his truck. On the other, far away from the notion of machismo, are women and their passions. To be macho is to have aggressive pride in one’s male attributes. Machismo is also “an exaggerated sense of masculinity stressing such attributes as physical courage, virility, domination of women, and aggressiveness or violence” (Miller and Swift, 1976, p. 68). How does this pervade the infantry, a place where one must be macho to survive? Claudia asserts that some soldiers think they are big and important and many soldiers “walk around with their arms out [she gestures like Hulk Hogan] and they think they’re so cool.” It is sometimes difficult to explain how one might act when in this institution. There seems to be a certain ambiance present in which a female might feel uncomfortable. For example, on one visit to the unit I sat in the hall waiting to speak with someone and a woman was with me waiting for her son. A soldier present sang a song about ‘foreskin.’ Similar occurrences happened during a training exercise. We were out on a map and compass exercise and a soldier was responsible for one leg of the route.

This soldier in charge of the map and compass aspect was unsure of our destination and the senior person asked him, “where do you [the soldier] think you’re taking us [the troops] to, the Cotton Club?”<sup>6</sup>

The military and the army have a clear link with a macho image. However, the infantry is unique and one must remember this when considering women’s success as infantry soldiers. How can women negotiate this machismo? How does a woman maintain her identity while wearing the persona of an infantry soldier? Infantry soldiers, infanteer or we could say infantrymen; some would say that it does not matter, but does it?

#### *4.2 Terminology of the Institution*

It is the everyday use of language that maintains the status quo between men and women. It is common to hear a group of men and women called ‘guys.’ While this may be thought harmless it excludes women. Throughout my research I heard the soldiers (both men and women) referred to as troops, guys, infantrymen and riflemen. These terms are supposed to include all members of The Royal Newfoundland Regiment, but do they include some members while excluding others? Or is this a moot issue? I use the word ‘guys’ when referring to a group of people, but should I? Do ‘guys’ include men and women? The Concise Oxford Dictionary (1999) defines ‘guy’ as a man, and ‘guys’ as people of either sex. Why does this term include both men and women in its plural form,

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The Cotton Club is a show bar located in downtown St. John’s, NL, where women strip for men.

while excluding women in its singular form? Similarly, the word 'man' follows the same pattern. Man is defined as an adult human male or a male member of a workforce, or team. But in the same instance it is also defined as a person, or a member of the human race. These common words define one sex and, despite traditional use, clearly exclude the other. Nilsen did a similar, but more in-depth, dictionary study. Nilsen found an overall ratio of three masculine words to one feminine word and discovered that when the "words denoted skill or power, the ration shifted 6:1, but when they carried negative connotations the ratio was reversed" (Gibbon, 1999, p. 49). Clearly language must be considered to effect language reform of a gender inclusive kind.

To take a closer look at how one defines these two sexes let us also consider "manly" and "womanly." To be manly one is defined as having or denoting those good qualities traditionally associated with men, such as courage and strength, or it can refer to an activity befitting a man. Womanly is not defined in most dictionaries, but feminine is defined as having qualities traditionally associated with women, especially delicacy and prettiness. According to these definitions the two terms, 'guys' or 'man,' cannot mean both sexes, male and female. But yet, we use 'guys' to refer to both sexes. Change may be met with resistance, but it is socially telling to continue to use the same word for essentially different beings. In *Words and Women*, lexicographer Alma Graham draws these contrasts: "If a woman is swept off a ship into the water, the cry is 'Man Overboard!' If she is killed by a hit-and-run driver, the charge is 'manslaughter.' If she is injured on the job, the coverage is 'workmen's compensation.' But if she arrives at a

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threshold marked 'Men Only,' she knows the admonition is not intended to bar animals or plants or inanimate objects. It is meant for her" (Miller and Swift, 1976, p.28). Similar to the use of 'guys' or 'rifleman,' it does not mean women. The military could use the term 'people' or 'troops', but some people continue to use 'guys' or even 'b'ys.' What do soldiers think? Reactions vary between male and female soldiers.

When I spoke with one respondent, Gregory, regarding the usage of the term 'rifleman,' he said that he wanted to do the right thing and use the proper words. He relates that he, "asked the Warrant Officer and he said that it [rifleman] was a military term and that you're not offending anyone by using it." It seems that these are the words of the institution. Are they offensive? Can they change? Why say rifleman? This term portrays a clear connotation to the male image. Is it necessary to say rifleman or infantryman? Can we substitute other terms? Infanteer is used, so could rifleman easily become rifle or rifle person? Could the language be simplified in this manner? The use of rifleman to include both men and women may be thought of as grammatically correct, but it is inconsistent with the subject it represents. Can we abandon the word rifleman, a word that is still seen as both suitable and legitimate?

Perhaps terminology is not offending anyone, but by continuing the use of rifleman, it excludes people. Nick had a different opinion from that of Gregory. He contends that, "the language still portrays men...there is still a stigma attached." People know the stigma is there, but they are unwilling to 'rock the boat' to discuss the issue at any great length.

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Some soldiers believe it is worthwhile to change this terminology. It is common courtesy to use language that is inclusive. Jonah says that, "I don't call them b'ys, I like troops...I'll say, come on troops. I don't say b'ys or treat them any different." To say 'b'ys' rather than troops is exclusive. The term 'troops' is inclusive, but 'b'ys' is not. Gregory claims that 'b'ys' is just a Newfoundland term for people, it does not mean one sex or the other. However, it is questionable if that word can be neutral, as discussed shortly by Pamela. If a word is used frequently, one might become desensitized to it, but that does not make it impartial. Jonah continues to say that if you use such words, you are treating those in your charge differently and that should not be tolerated.

With all the issues that new recruits face when entering the military, do we really want to talk about the use of a few words? Terminology is a barrier that slows down integration, but challenging it can be seen as causing more problems for women. Gender exclusive terminology may be another reason to not involve yourself in this institution. Some of the female respondents, however, would prefer to ignore this. Erin argues that,

It was called rifleman and now it isn't called that, it's rifle person. I mean, that is a big thing now, they [staff] will emphasize and say, 'Oh, I'm sorry, I mean rifle person,' totally drawing to the fact that they can't say rifleman anymore. I mean as far as I'm concerned rifleman is rifleman, I don't take offense because it isn't rifle woman. You know, if you talk about spokesman, the language is mostly male-dominated anyway. It's no big thing. I think it is politically correct and includes the women but they end up drawing attention to it more.

But what is really going on here? Is it 'no big thing'? It seems that the use of inclusive terminology is a change that is being met with resistance. This resistance is evident when there is attention drawn to the word in use. It is this resistance and the additional attention

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then given to them that women in the military find discouraging. To say that it is 'no big deal' is an understatement. The terminology reflects the male image of the institution and the failure to completely drop this terminology can be interpreted as a refusal to fully accept women. Again, how can saying "men" include women? It does not. However, another respondent, Denise, suggests that "it's just a figure of speech. It's stupid to get irritated about things like that. If you tried to change people you would be doing it all the time." One has to pick one's battles. Women entering the military must get through the training and move on to the next step of their career. Do women want to fight resistance every time it arises?

Tracy discusses this resistance. She told of a lesson that she attended where the instructor was "up in front of the classroom and he said something like infantryman and then he made a big point to say something like, infantry persons.... excuse me [exaggerated]. It wasn't to be politically correct, it was to be an asshole." It would not be difficult for this instructor to have simply said infanteers. Why did the instructor's choice of words turn the classroom into such an uncomfortable place? It causes tension for those present. To use infanteers or neutral terms does make a difference. This difference was made clear by Pamela when she said,

He [officer] said soldiers. He said that he commends those that stuck with it [a weekend training exercise] and said to his troops, 'What is your problem? Why did you give up so fast?' But he used the right terminology. When they say, the females didn't make it you have just put down every single female that has really tried and made it. He didn't put down just the females and I have respect for that. I really do. All he had to do was use the right word and you wouldn't have had to think about it.

Use the right word and you elicit respect; continue to use words that instill the male image and you get anger, indifference, and powerlessness. It is clear that the use of “riflemen” does make a difference to some women in this study. Regardless of the assertion that it means both sexes, it does not. Initially, it might seem that terminology is not important, but it must be if using the gender-neutral word evokes respect among female soldiers, while the use of gender-specific words can so easily take away that respect or lead to indifference. The transition may be awkward, but it is necessary if women are to be fully integrated on equal terms with men. One who struggles with this change will manage better than those who cling to old terms. As a researcher, I went out into the field with the soldiers and found myself experiencing what Pamela referred to when she said those broad statements like “the females didn’t make it . . . put down every single female that has really tried and made it.” I was a witness to this and experienced the feelings first hand while I was on exercise.

Earlier, I mentioned an exercise called Nautical Caper. This exercise will now be discussed because of the gender exclusive language used by a superior. During this exercise we went on a 7-km march. I had not been prepared to do any hiking; as a researcher I had been spending my time sitting, reading and typing, not preparing for a 7-km hike with a 35-40 pound rucksack on my back. We were partially up a hill when soldiers started to fall out. A Master Corporal fell out, then a female and a male soldier fell out of line. I felt really good that I was able to keep up with the other soldiers. I was



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focused and determined. The Sergeant was checking up on each soldier and when he asked me how I was doing, I replied jokingly, "Ask me that question after we get to the top of the hill!" One of the soldiers that fell out returned to the hike without her rucksack. Then an officer went quickly up the hill, and he was red-faced and angry. He was barking at us, "Five meters, five fucking meters apart!" We had to get five meters apart he continued to holler. He then turned around and yelled, "Come on ladies," to the entire platoon. I did a double take. Here I was walking up this hill, with my own ruck on my back, improperly dressed but still keeping up with everyone else. 'Fuck you' I thought (it is interesting to note that this was my response, I was a not a soldier yet I was negatively affected by his comments). Three people fell out of ranks, two males and one female. I felt great for keeping up with the platoon, but when the officer said, 'Come on ladies,' I was distressed and insulted. His attempt to motivate the soldiers was to insult them by calling them women. This slur was his attempt to challenge his male and female soldiers to do better. I can only imagine how the female soldiers felt when they heard him say that. This is a term that is used to refer to women, one in particular, that can be condescending to women, as well as men. It seems that the best way to challenge one's masculinity is the accusation of femininity. Why use this to encourage soldiers? I discussed this with a female soldier and she said, "If you are doing poorly and he calls you ladies then it says it all, right there. I don't say that was the first or the last time that 'ladies' will be said. That slur. Anyone who thinks that doesn't mean anything obviously has the same sexist mind frame. Or have heard it so much that it doesn't matter anymore. If they say nothing

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against it then they must agree on a subconscious level.”

At a later date, I spoke to this officer. He did not remember making this comment. He was angry at the troop's performance, he said, and if he did say that comment, it was a way to motivate them to do better. When we consider again what the Oxford dictionary defines as manly, we remember the dichotomy of man and woman. To be manly or masculine means to have qualities traditionally associated with men, such as courage or strength. To be womanly or feminine means to have qualities traditionally associated with women, especially delicacy and prettiness. The 'good' qualities, required by those in the military, particularly the infantry, are associated with men and the non-desirable qualities are associated with women. A strong woman can be defined as courageous or can be given these traditionally male qualities. However, to describe a man using traditionally feminine qualities is insulting. Saying “he is pretty” or “he is delicate” can allude to questions regarding sexuality. Calling these soldiers 'ladies' is an insult to their masculinity, challenging them to be more of a man, tougher and stronger.

Tracy discusses an incident where she believes that a male soldier could easily charge an instructor due to the language that he used. She says that, “It wasn't necessary...what he called him was very sexist to a woman and degrading.” I asked her what happened. She said,

Very strange...he told this guy, this instructor, hmmm. He was right to freak out because of what he did. Overnight on our indoc [indoctrination] course we had a mock attack by the instructors. We had the arctic tent all set up and instructors attacked and we all had to get out. We had to hurry up and do the attack. Anyway, this guy, he wasn't in my tent, he was in the other tent and

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this was after we all came back. The lanterns got started up again and stuff. He was in the tent next to us so we heard everything. This guy, when everyone was supposed to run out, he decided that he was going to turn off the lantern and get back in his sleeping bag and go back to sleep. During this whole mock attack. So, in a way, the instructor was right to freak out. When he got back, he realized that, and he was pissed. This instructor was known for being very strict. You do not want to piss him off. He wasn't a dickhead just really hardcore. So, anyway, he came back and realized what happened and he said buddy's name and "If you don't get out of that tent I am going to kick you in the cunt." That was very sexist and degrading. Why did he say that? There were a lot more appropriate things to say, even kick you in the ass. Anyway, he could have taken him up on charges.

When I asked her how she felt when she heard him say that to the soldier she replied:

At the time I never really felt anything. It didn't click in. I remember being shocked because even though you hear them swear, fuck is used a lot, but when he said that I was shocked but I didn't think it was degrading. I hate that word. I hate it. That is the stupidest word ever. I didn't think about it at the time. Only when I came home. I was shocked that he used the word, personally I hate it, and that was the first time I ever heard it being said. But at the time I was shocked but not for the context. Kick in the ass, in the head, whatever. I mean, he is a man and he doesn't have that but women don't have that either. Stupidest word ever. I have always hated that word. It is disgusting. It is dirty and slut and whore all in one word. Yeah, I was like, did he just say what I thought he said? But it was like, like calling him a woman. Like my girlfriend can run better than you. They are insulting him but insulting the women as well. But not specifically.

You know why do women have to be five times better to gain the respect and the guys get it just from being there? I don't know. It is only the slightest attitude or look that can take away your level of morale. Especially if you respected them. I think that once you have time in, nothing will shock you. It gets to the point that nothing shocks you anymore. The respect for them is gone. You then have to go back and listen to this idiot. It is disgusting.

To threaten to kick a male soldier in their nonexistent female genitalia alludes to a double threat. One is a threat of violence, and the other is a threat to the soldier's masculinity. The question is which threat is worse? The impact this had on the soldier in

question is unknown, but the impact on one of the female soldiers present is known. That word, "cunt," evokes great disgust with Tracy. She "hates it," it is "the stupidest word ever," it is "disgusting," and it is "dirty and slut and whore all in one word." Using such words impacts on morale. It not only insults the soldier subject to the comment, but also those listening. It brings down morale and it erodes respect. To threaten to kick a man in "the cunt" is not only a threat but an attack on his masculinity. It seems that "the ultimate insults males direct at each other are those expressed in female-gender terms. One small boy humiliates another by calling him a sissy or a girl" (Miller and Swift, 1976, p. 117).

How do women enter this institution, where becoming a soldier means to be anything but feminine? What do men think of the women who attempt to gain access? What are their expectations of these women? Surprisingly, most offensive sexist comments are not deliberate; "they creep in as a result of laziness, habit, or over reliance on what the rule books say is correct, and they yield to the test of exactness" (Miller and Swift, 1976, p. 158). We may not be able to change everything all at once; however, a vital change in language use in The RNR or toward gender inclusive language is needed and further, is undoubtedly a healthy respect for equality.

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#### *4.3 Physical Expectations of Women Who Enter the Military*

##### *4.4.1 Physical Training Requirement*

“Let’s face the facts,” Lorne states, “women aren’t as strong as men.” Is there any truth in this claim that women are not as strong as men? If so, does this mean that they are not strong enough for the job?

Presently, the entrance requirements for the reserves are differentiated by sex. The message being sent is that women do not have the same physical capacity as men. Why else would the requirements be different? If we refer to the previous example we could say that since women have not been encouraged to develop fitness through sports activities during their early years, they lack the muscular endurance of men by the time that they are young adults. Despite this line of thought, sex differences are not absolute. While the average man may be stronger than the average woman, some women are stronger than some men. Perhaps it only takes more training for women to become as strong as men.

The entrance requirements, as of 2002, are as follows:

Table 4.1 Physical Entrance Requirements

*Summary of Physical Test Items by Gender*

<b>Test Item</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
<b>Push-Ups</b>		
Under 35 years of age	19	9
35 and over	14	7
<b>Sit-Ups</b>		
Under 35	19	15
35 and over	17	12
<b>Hand Grip (in kilograms)</b>		
Under 35	75	50
35 and over	73	48
<b>Aerobic Fitness</b>	<i>* a 2.4km run - time in minutes</i> <i>** see below</i>	

**Aerobic Fitness**

	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>
<b>Under 30 years</b>	11:56-10:13	14:26-12:36
<b>30-34</b>	12:26-10:35	14:55-12:57
<b>35-39</b>	12:56-10:58	15:25-13:27
<b>40-44</b>	13:25-11:12	15:55-13:57
<b>45-49</b>	13:56-11:27	16:25-14:26
<b>50-54</b>	14:25-11:57	16:54-14:56
<b>55 and over</b>	14:56-12:27	17:24-15:27

Which activities use what muscles? Why is there such a difference in male and female requirements? Is this an indication that women are not as fit as men, or are incapable of being as strong? Considering muscular differences, it is true that women possess, on average, less muscle than do men. However, precisely how much lower “depends on the muscular function which is being measured; pulling, pushing, lifting or endurance. Nevertheless, so far as is known, muscles of the same size are the same strength in men and women” (Dyer, 1982, p. 72). The lifestyles of men and women may explain differences in muscular strength. One must remember that men and women use muscles differently, therefore, differences in strength cannot be thought of as only biological.

While women may have lower levels of muscular strength, they generally have a higher level of endurance and flexibility. The amount of time that men and women can

exact maximal muscular force is not significantly different (Dyer, 1982, p. 73). Also, women are generally more flexible than men. This flexibility is “very important in allowing longer strides, better hurdling techniques and better kick and arm movements in swimming than would be expected on simple comparisons with men of the same height and weight (Dyer, 1982, p. 73).” All such skills would benefit any soldier.

While differences in men and women can be found with regard to the lactic acid system, and the oxygen or aerobic system (differences in lungs and breathing, blood circulation, body composition and shape), it is not known whether differences are inevitably due to innate biological factors, or to what extent they are consequences of the generally more active life that males lead almost from birth. Proper training can decrease any disadvantages that may be present. Rather than continuing to assume that women are simply not as strong as men, it would be better to recognize the physical potential of women.

Biologically, women have different abilities. Any organization that attempts to maximize their potential and efficiency would make use of these. However, it seems that, as women enter the military, their various abilities are not recognized. Rather, what seems to be happening is the assumption that women must adhere to the male model physique. Resulting from this is a dismissive attitude toward positive performances and a focus is then given to the negative. This attention given to the lesser performance explains it as poor physical fitness that cannot match that of the men. These physical fitness tests were originally designed to measure men's fitness. It would be possible to redesign tests where



women would excel and men fail. At any rate, women were allowed in the military but these tests did not change to measure women's fitness. Women's fitness would be measured differently, as upper body strength is not women's strong suit, but flexibility is.

The different entrance requirements bring attention to the expectation that women must be judged according to attributes of the male physique. When asked about this, Lorne questions, "Are women only going to be asked to do 50% of what I can do? We have sacrificed everything in the Canadian Forces for political correctness." Do different entrance requirements imply a difference in performance? According to another soldier, Oliver, these different entrance requirements "teach women right from the beginning that there is a double standard and you can take advantage of it if you so choose. And they [women] do." This is an idea shared by another soldier, Ken, who says, "I think that right away, females get preconceived notions that they are expected to perform less than someone else. That creates a problem." But do women really believe they are expected to perform at a lower level than men? One female soldier, Erin, spoke on the same subject,

Right from the start you create a double standard. They say equal opportunity. If they say equal opportunity then it should be equal right from the start...When you get on the course you do all the same PT, the same everything. So why are the standards different? Right then, you know they expect less from you and then you tend to do less...I think right away that explains why women aren't as good because they were never expected to be.

Allowing women into the infantry with different entrance requirements from men means that women could qualify with a lower level of physical fitness and strength than men, but receive the same performance rating. Further, the less qualified women are then

expected to be able to keep up on a course designed for men. The military let women in but did not revise the basic systems. The entrance requirement causes confusion; everyone in this study has different ideas on who was better at what. Several respondents claim either women are better at running, men have better upper body strength, or women have stronger legs. Inconsistency is evident as we see the many claims that evolve (often without substance or research on which to base these claims). The respondents' opinions vary immensely. There seems to be no consideration of the socialization process and the training that is undertaken to develop men and women to achieve the standard set forth by the infantry. Biological sex differences that may be present could be overcome with proper training. This is expressed in the book, *Challenging the Men*, which contends that "women's participation in combat arms has been confused. The ability of women to perform has developed in ignorance of many of the true biological differences between the sexes, it overemphasizes some of the differences which do exist and is based on quite unwarranted assumption about some of the supposed and seemingly obvious biological sex differences which, in reality, are nothing of the kind" (Dyer, 1982, p. 230).

Jonah points out that, "physically [women] are not as strong but they are strong enough. Like the strongest guy is going to be stronger than the strongest woman, but they are strong enough." While Jonah agrees with the popular notion of strength discrepancies, he realizes that while women, like some of the male soldiers, might not be as fit as the fittest man, they can still do the job. Tracy offers another perspective on this issue,

Women have to be more, whatever. They have to prove themselves twice as much. They have to be twice as good as the guy. But they stand out more because they are a girl, right? It is a physical strength thing. A lot of it, when it is your turn to do whatever, it is almost like everyone is looking to see if you can do it. When it is the guys' turn they may be turned around chatting but when it is your turn they look...guys, they would make excuses and the other guys would support them more. They would say that they couldn't do it because they were drinking last night. It would never be because they couldn't do it. That would be different for a girl.

Is it a physical strength issue? There is a lot of controversy surrounding physical fitness. It is much more complex than first thought. Physical fitness abilities have become a mask to view women. While Erin had concerns with the double standard entrance requirements, she observes that "there are a lot of very intelligent women who have the whole thinking aspect but it is physically a challenge and you work your way up to it. No matter what shape you are in, if you're determined enough, you can do it." This sentiment was also shared by Alison, who asserts that she "can do the same things males can do, it is just a matter of time and training." Physiologically, these requirements and women's ability to meet them are not predetermined. Bonnie further notes that,

To be an infanteer you do not have to carry a heavy load like a pack mule, you need endurance and you must have a level of confidence. And brainpower to get through stressful and panic situations. The last I checked that wasn't genetically predetermined.

Pamela sums it up by concluding that "they got upper strength [she motions to her biceps], well I have it ...upper, upper strength [she motions to her head]. I got it up here and I will be pushing myself." It seems that the different entrance requirement promotes resentment surrounding the physical fitness of men and women. Rather than focusing on

the different abilities of the sexes, why not concentrate on common abilities?

#### *4.4.2 Other Biological Anchors of Discrimination*

Menstruation is not a new issue. In the past sanitary options were minimal, but today there are so many products on the market, it is often difficult to choose what to use. Nevertheless, why are males uncomfortable with discussing the issue of menstruation with female soldiers?

There are two results one might expect when entering such a disciplined regime of physical training: menstruation can become more frequent, or cease all together. Often, women are not aware of the effects training might have on their menstrual cycles and male supervisors are uncomfortable telling them.

Alison's experience in the tear gas huts is a prime example. She said that one of the staff came to speak to them [the females] and, "he was really uncomfortable." The female soldiers were not clear on how to prepare for this training and, as a result, they did not really want to participate in the gas hut exercises. Alison continued to say that she thought they were spoken to because, "it was possible to start your period. I think it was really a whole lot of talk." Claudia thought that "we had to put on pads before we went in there and there was something about not being able to bear children. I was like, how is that possible? But no one really questioned it." These women were spoken to before they entered the gas huts because a male soldier, in a leadership position, thought women were at risk. He thought tear gas exposure had implications for bearing children. Another male soldier implied it was because the gas huts might cause the onset of menstruation. Why is

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there such confusion? Is it intentional? What are the real implications of gas-hut training?

When I spoke to a male soldier about the effect of tear gas on women, he replied that,

The older school guys didn't want to talk about it. It is the basics of life. We went up to Aldershot last year and a part of that was gas hut training and it affects your skin. It is an irritant. It really affects any areas that are moist. Your nose, your armpit and the women, now that would burn the rig right out of you if you don't have protection on. We tell them before they go up put on a big thick pad and make sure they got it on when they go in the gas hut.

Is this all that happens? What about the belief that it would affect your ability to bear children? Or the effect that the gas might have on bringing on your period?

Literature on the effects of tear gas has been difficult to obtain. However, there are numerous web sites available that discuss the effects of tear gas on protestors, both male and female. Tear gas affects mucous membranes (the inside of your mouth and nose, among other places, are lined with mucous membranes) and acts as a skin irritant. If the tear gas contains methylene chloride, it may cause "mental confusion, headache, tingling of limbs, rapid heartbeat, visual and auditory hallucinations, menstruation cycle disruption, spontaneous abortion, and varying effects on lungs and the digestive system" (*Medical Information From Prague*, 2002).

I asked the soldier referred to previously how they [the staff] ensure that females are prepared when entering the gas huts. He replied:

I'll never forget one of the staff, he came up to me and said we'll get (the female corporal) to mention it to them. No b'y, I'll go mention it to them, you don't need to bring someone in from outside to mention that to them. Okay, okay, just make sure you do it. Are you sure that you don't want female corporal to come down? Fuck no, I took the girls aside and said now bring a nice thick pad with you now and they were like, okay. We carried on. They came up and there was an older

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woman and she said to me we got to go put on those pads now and I said sure. I forgot about it and I said go on in the woods there, and they went off. Carried on. The staff came up to me and said are they gone to do their thing. I was like, I sent them in the woods. You sent them in the woods? Jesus Christ, couldn't you have driven them into the shacks, into the bathrooms in there? Holy fuck, sir, what's the big deal? They're only putting a pad on. You're going to get us in trouble, charged.... Holy fuck Sir, what are you talking about they didn't give a fuck. They didn't care. They are down there now.

He continued on with the explanation that,

a lot of this stuff comes from the management of it. It depends on how you deal with it if it becomes an issue or not. I mean, I always go with the fact that women don't want to be treated differently, so don't. That's the way I see it. That's the way I've always dealt with it if there is anything to deal with, and in this situation there's nothing to deal with. They're no fucking different. That is the way I deal with it. Treat them like everyone else and they will be happy.

An underlying theme present in Lorne's discussion is the 'older school guys' who 'didn't want to talk about it.' What does old school mean? Typically these are the people, the 'old boys' who can be found in any organization. They continue to cling to old thoughts and ideas. In this particular case, these men adhere to traditional assumptions about women's work and the taboo surrounding menstruation prevails. The old boys' mentality has led to confusion regarding gas hut training. This soldier seizes the problem and tackles it. As a result of combating the old school, he treats the women fairly; the same as men, not differently.

This discussion around menstruation may be due to the 'old boys' mentality as referred to above. However, this may not be the correct explanation. Such ignorance around certain subjects may be common if those in leadership positions are not well-

trained. Therefore, this lack of knowledge surrounding menstruation may simply be due to leadership incompetence or ignorance, and have no connection to this as a woman's health issue.

#### *4.4 The Good Old Boys*

Research suggests that the 'old boys' network that Lorne refers to is still present in the military. The concept of the 'old boys' network was extensively discussed by the serving population and marginally mentioned by the trainee population in a 1998 harassment study by Major J.E. Adams-Roy. The discussion includes comments dealing with the marginalization of certain groups or individuals by the traditional majority and focuses on the culture of the military, a culture similar to a "male dominated locker room"(Adams-Roy, 1999, p. 34). This culture represses attitudes rather than changing them.

Similarly, when I asked Jonah about the 'old boys' and their thoughts, he replied, "I have heard people [old boys] say that women shouldn't be in the military. I've heard sergeants and stuff say it but not about any particular girl. They just say it and when you ask them why, they say, 'fucking can't keep up on the ruck marches.'" This mirrors the research by Adams-Roy when a female respondent commented that the "older" generation still have problems accepting women as "anything other than child-bearers and dishwashers" (1999, p. 34). Another of my interviewees, Nick, said that the "old school is still alive and will give women a hard time." What might this comment be based on? Why is the old school still alive in an organization that is undergoing change and why is

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there a need to give women a hard time?

When women respondents in the present study were asked about the 'old boys' a common theme emerged. Bonnie stated that "some of the military hasn't changed. The boys haven't retired yet. You just can't come down with legislation and expect things to change overnight . . . Someone that used to be a pig is trying not to be a pig, right?" In 1988, the CF promulgated a policy of no tolerance toward harassment. In 1995, the policy was revised. This legislation is progressive, however, as Bonnie states, change will take time.

Are the 'old boys' changing? The military is attempting to change the climate with SHARP (Standard of Harassment and Racism Prevention) training, the implementation of a unit harassment advisor and harassment policy, among other projects. Soldiers like Lorne think that the 'old boys' are trying to change as they are in a new military now where they are not as free as they once were to express their archaic ideas and opinions. Lorne claims that "most people, the old leaders, if they are not sure they will ask someone else, and they go with my advice."

It is a pleasant thought that the 'old boys' will soon retire and that those who remain are asking for advice from less traditional members. However, when I think back to my experience on Nautical Caper I did not envision the officer who said "come on ladies" as a member of the 'old boys' network. I had my own images and stereotypes to combat, but, because of my experience, I realize now that being an 'old boy' has little to do with age or career stage. Harvey, someone else that I did not consider an 'old boy,'



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comments that women are “not strong enough, when you throw a rucksack on their back, they can’t do it.” These men were obviously caught up in old school ideas and thoughts; it is clear that these beliefs still permeate the ranks.

### *Conclusion*

When I walk with the uniform on I don’t think that there’s anything that they could say to me that I couldn’t handle - Pamela.

Women are embracing the military role of the infantry. Stereotypes clearly exist about what constitutes being a man or a woman, and continue to function very powerfully to shape our expectations of each other. Women challenge such expectations when they enter the military. This chapter has considered various issues that characterize women and the military. One such consideration is the terminology of the institution, which, even if unwittingly, is an instrument that continues to marginalize women. A second issue that pervades the issue of incorporating women in the military is the physical fitness requirements. While consideration is given to differences in physique, the differences in the physical fitness requirements actually strengthen stereotypes regarding the female body. Rather than recognize women’s physical abilities, the current practice means that women are expected to be assessed on the basis of the male physique. This can result in failure. Another issue that disassociates women from the norm of what it is to be a soldier is the ignorance surrounding menstruation. This has become a territory of confusion. A combination of gender stereotypes and ignorance results in the attitudes of the ‘old boys’ network continuing to pervade the organization. Ultimately, repercussions stemming from

such ignorance are felt by women throughout many aspects of their training. These attitudes also feed into the prominent theme of sex discussed in chapter 5, which engages in an exploration of prevailing sexism. This includes themes that emerge from this climate, such as male-bonding and sexual harassment, together with women's reactions to these aspects of their lives as soldiers.

Chapter 5: The Two Meanings of Regimental Ground Sheet

*Introduction*

Man should be trained for war and woman for the recreation of the warrior: all else is folly.

- Friedrich Nietzsche, 1883

During wartime, women have traditionally been seen as sweethearts, wives or prostitutes. These roles are changing to include one of a soldier, but as women create this new role old ideas stick. There are the beliefs that women must still provide to the soldier, in other words, be available. Again, an examination of the male image present in the military is necessary. A key aspect of this male image is control and power. A link will be made with women's past role as sweetheart, and the new role as soldier. The two roles merge and as men pursue the military's constructed image of manhood, in pursuit of power, conflict is inevitable. It will be argued that power is equated with sex and women become the object of this attempt to achieve such power. Sex with women becomes a common topic of discussion that bonds the men and from this, a term emerges, "regimental ground sheet." This develops into a culture of harassment. Thus, discussion in this chapter elicits an acute awareness that the manifestation of a masculinity permeates throughout every element of this institution and the repercussions are harmful; moreover, endless.

*5.1 Wives, Mothers and Now Soldiers*

The home front provides important moral support for the dangerous jobs the military engages in overseas. Letters and packages from family back home alleviate the

loneliness of the average Canadian soldier. The romanticized and specifically gendered image of a woman crying and waving good-bye as her male loved one leaves for war is prevalent. There is a similar image in which she waits with arms wide open for her warrior to arrive home, usually ending with a passionate embrace as the woman and man clutch each other.

A unit must become a soldier's family, however, without women this is a difficult task. If women can be made to "play the role of wives, daughters, mothers, and 'sweethearts', waving their men off to war, writing them letters of encouragement and devotion in the field, reminding them that women's and children's safety depends on men's bravery, *then* women can be an invaluable resource to commanders" (Enloe, 1983, p. 5).

While this image is slowly changing, women traditionally perform two roles when associated with war. They are either the supporting wife, daughter, or sister, or, they fill a sexual role as the prostitute, or the rape victim. Sex and prostitution have eventually led to men taking, rather than paying for, sex. Not surprisingly rape is also associated with war and the military. It has been said that "rape during armed conflict is a socially constructed experience that is produced by a series of deliberate policy decisions, and that is therefore neither inevitable nor unchangeable" (Moser and Clark, 2001, p. 56). It is presumed that, at times, the military provides prostitutes in an attempt to maintain a high level of morale. For whatever reason, it is clear that sexuality and militarism intertwine. Further, it seems that "each time a military establishment reasserts its 'masculine'

identity, it is inclined to do so by purging or marginalising women, and it does this by insinuating that women are essentially whores" (Enloe, 1983, p. 19).

An eventual development from this tendency is the link between prostitution and rape. During the First Vietnam War American soldiers were provided with non-Vietnamese women as prostitutes, but then, in 1954, when the French withdrew in defeat economic desperation set in and Vietnamese women also became involved in prostitution. By 1973, between 300,000 and 500,000 women were working as prostitutes (Enloe, 1983, p. 33). Enloe quotes an American soldier who clearly illustrates this link between prostitution and rape, "You take a group of men...they are in an all-male environment. Let's face it. Nature is nature. There are women available...you don't want a prostitute. You've got an M-16. What do you need to pay a lady for? You go down to the village and you take what you want. I saw guys who I believe had never had any kind of sex...they'd come back a double veteran" (1983, p. 34). According to Enloe, a double veteran is slang for "having sex with a woman and then killing her" (1983, p. 34). While the Vietnam war is long past, the connection between women, rape, prostitution and violence is a strong one. It is a connection that continues today as women continue to provide essential support to the military, albeit in different ways.

These different ways are evident as women construct a third role – the one of soldier and warrior. Women are in the military, but this institution remains predominantly male and repeatedly reminds us of the polarity between the masculine and the feminine, the idea that men and women are fundamentally different. Those who choose to step

outside of their defined roles, other than in a culturally approved manner, risk being ostracized. Women who enter the military no longer perform the established roles approved by society in the past. Consequently, they are highly visible and subject to different strains and pressures because they still tend to be categorized according to pre-existing sex-stereotyping. When one respondent told her father about her interest in joining the military, her father stereotyped those who choose a non-traditional occupation. He assumed that because women were non-conventional in their trade, they would also be unorthodox in their sexual views and preferences. Samantha discusses her father's reaction, "Dad didn't want me to get in there. I was Daddy's little girl, and that was a battle in itself. He also asked me if I knew, 'what kinds of women get in that?' "

There are only two types of women who join the military, in Samantha's father's estimation - whores and lesbians. Many respondents, both men and women, in this study claim that the women entering are whores. However, throughout this research, there was little discussion about the second assumed type of women, lesbians.

### *5.2 Proving Manhood*

Military men live almost exclusively among other men and are subject 24 hours a day to pressures to conform to the military standards of masculine behaviour. Despite an advertising campaign and the Canadian Forces' push for integration, the experience war provides "is presented as an exclusively male experience and a masculinity defined in terms of being tough and selfless, having courage, guts and endurance, a lack of squeamishness, a high resistance to pain and discomfort and tight control in emotional

matters” (Beynon, 2002, p.67). Society traditionally constructs a male image that the military subscribes to. This is a society that, despite some progress, continues to see men and women differently.

As discussed in chapter 4, gender norms influence how people view men and women. Throughout childhood, young girls are encouraged to imitate the seductive appearance of adult women, while young boys are motivated to appreciate this appearance and to respond in an active way. Women entering the military do not accept this socially-dictated role of pleasing men and, as a result, often face difficulties. In Rebecca's story repercussions of this behaviour are illustrated. Rebecca discusses an experience she had during a field exercise. The troops were told to put on camouflage paint. When she put on the camouflage paint Rebecca discusses the reaction of the male soldiers,

They would say, 'Fuck, you look some ugly.' You would then wake up in the morning and the guys would say, 'Don't fucking look at me.' I mean, you all look like crap. They would say things like, 'Don't look at me. Gross. Get that shit off your face.' I was like, 'You got it on your face. Get it off your face.' And they were like, 'That does not look good on women.' Oh man, I felt like crap. I was like, I need another woman.

Women are expected to look a certain way and when they do not, they become targets of ridicule. In this instance, Rebecca was expected to look pleasing to the men and when she did not, she was laughed at and shut out.

Not only are women expected to look a certain way, they are also expected to act a certain way. If women do not accept their role of being sexually pleasing to men, they are

subjected to ridicule. Women's reactions to individuals may also be perceived with indifference, which is evidenced when Tracy talks about when "this guy said something to me, something disgusting about him doing whatever to my...it was so disgusting and I was just like, you are such a, you know...He just kept on going down the hallway, he didn't care. It didn't affect him." Tracy was expected to be available and pleasing. She challenges this assumption, but rather than receiving an apology, the male shows no concern with her reaction and maintains indifference as he dismisses her.

This relationship of power by the actor, man, and recipient, woman, evolves as we get older. It feeds the notion that a man who sleeps around and has multiple sex partners is a 'man's man' or more masculine. Men perform this ascribed masculinity. Furthermore, there is an implied manly code of conduct in the military that must be adhered to. This masculinity is a bonding agent that brings the men closer together while pushing women away. While men who tend to sleep around are seen as powerful, women who do the same are seen in a derogatory manner that is completely different from the men. Gregory maintains that with "guys, the way it is, if a girl sleeps with more than one guy then she's loose...and if a guy does it, it's like yeah, way to go, you're the man." Throughout the research such talk by respondents was common. While this relationship or heterosexuality was assumed and promoted, the discussion of homosexuality among men did not surface. Men "view themselves as subjects - autonomous actors whose success depends on initiative, assertiveness if not aggressiveness, and persistence. The male body should reflect this by being strong and tough. The ways in which men dress,



walk, talk all mirror these societal expectations. "Masculine" traits are applied to the pursuit of females, the objects" (Basow, 1992, p. 152). By acting out this masculinity, men find common ground that brings them closer.

This performance allows men to have power, and also equates manhood with power. To have power, one must have dominance over something or someone. When men perform this masculine role and pursue females, they not only exercise their power over women, but also receive approval from other men, thus bringing them even closer together. Manhood and "masculinism is celebrated through 'buddydom' and relationships between men" (Beynon, 2002, p.17). When one respondent, Oliver, was asked about this pursuit of females by soldiers he acknowledges that, "there's a guy mentality, when you go...when you go to a bar and pick up and do that [have sex with women] . Now some guys think that's perfectly okay. If they [women] spend 6 weeks around guys then it starts to rub off on them and they just go with it." This attitude or 'guy mentality' Oliver refers to pervades the training grounds where men and women interact as comrades. There is an amplification of this attitude in the military institution, a place where men must be more aggressive, more male and, consequently, more sexually aggressive.

Central to this image of maleness is the belief in a powerful sexual force. Sex is power; sex with women equates to power over women. The tradition of machismo leads to locker room talk that pushes men into the role of someone who is always interested in and ready for sex, even in the trenches. Not only does this locker room talk contribute to the bonding process, it also maintains power over women, undermining their confidence

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as soldiers and reminding them of their vulnerability. Erin discusses a female recruit who was in a trench with a soldier who “kept hitting on her. And he kept it up. It got so bad that she left the trench. She took her weapon, she took her kit and she got up and she went to the next trench over.” Erin continues to say that during section attacks the same male soldier would “be standing there staring at your ass and making comments.” How could this female recruit conduct herself as a soldier when fighting off the advances of her comrade? How could she view herself as an equal when her trench partner saw her as nothing more than an object of sexual pursuit? These experiences will clearly have an effect on women as they struggle in this foreign environment.

As male soldiers assert this masculinity and exercise their power, they bond and become a team. Male bonding and the hierarchies men create between themselves and the ways they express their sexuality with each other have repercussions for women even though women are not directly involved (Hester, 1992, p.14). Those that accept this dominant mode of sexuality accept that sex, as a topic of conversation, will be popular among the soldiers. When Tracy, a female soldier, was asked how it felt to hear this type of talk, she responds,

I don't know what I am doing here. They [male soldiers] are nothing but a bunch of sexist pigs . . . But what they talk about is so disgusting and demeaning. It is about doing somebody. They don't care that I am here. They have no concern that I would feel whatever about it. I don't think you need to watch every word you say but sometimes the conversation is so disgusting that they shouldn't be talking about it whether I was there or not there.

Clearly, some men are not making allowance for the new addition, women, to the

organization as they consciously continue previous behaviour. On the other hand, some men are considering women and are trying to exclude them. These men know exactly what they are doing.

In the past, women were not in the military domain where they could witness bonding among male soldiers. The absence of women permitted men to act without inhibition. As women now enter this institution, they are no longer at a distance. Rather, they are in the trenches next to men, with them; they are comrades. However, this sexual power continues to prevail. Samantha's experiences correspond with Tracy's. She said, "I can gossip, but when they [male soldiers] talk it is just vulgar. I never heard them say anything about a guy being a slut." Claudia also addresses the issue of sex as a topic of conversation, "And then they go bragging about it, 'oh yeah, I was with her for one night. She was good.' You know I don't want to hear that. They talk about it behind her back and stuff." It seems that there are many things that a man can do to promote his masculinity, and conversations about sex reflect his power. This focal point of discussion for men "leads to a quantitative approach to sexuality - gaining a sexual conquest is described as 'scoring.' Power is quite explicit here. Within this whole construction of male sexuality, if sex is aimed at conquest, then a woman who allows sexual contact has been conquered, whether this is how she feels about it or not. For the man, the more sexual conquests the more powerful he is" (Coveney et al., 1984, p.17).

Rebecca discusses her opinion of male soldiers going to the local bar to have sex with women. She said that, "a few of the guys went out and got laid and that was fine but

if I went out and got laid, I would be a dirty crack whore, skank, whatever right? They were 'the man' because they went out and got laid." Again, manhood equates with sexuality and sexuality is fundamental to power. When men exercise this power it reminds women of their inferior status. In this instance, women are objects. Men use them to act out their sexual prowess, yet a woman is still seen as "a dirty crack whore, skank" if she sleeps around. Women are unable to claim the power that men obtain for doing the exact same thing. If they could, this would mean that they would have power over their objects, the men. Further, this labelling by men of women, may be seen as a tool to proclaim men's lack of acceptance of women in the military. These persistent sexual comments highlight the culture of the military and maintain control over women who are struggling to succeed in this new, alien environment.

How are the women entering this predominantly male institution able to integrate as they deal with being the sexual object of men's attention? Women dedicate themselves to personal goals. Pamela observes that, "when I put on the uniform, I feel that I am somebody, somebody different, but I feel that I can do anything, that I can take on anyone." Further, these women have a clear loyalty to The Royal Newfoundland Regiment. Interestingly, the women do not associate this unit with the negative attitudes they encounter in some of its soldiers. "It's historic too," Alison says, "the Regiment played a big part in world wars. So, as for being a Newfoundlander, being involved in the Regiment means a lot." Further, the skills they learn evoke a sense of self-respect. Rebecca affirms this when she says that, "the more I did, the prouder I got. I was proud to

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be a woman and I was proud to do it. I mean we were doing section attacks and my friends were home flipping burgers.” It is for these reasons that women continue to enter this institution despite difficulties. Not only must they tackle old prejudices, they must also confront new kinds of prejudices and unethical behaviours. These are already deeply rooted in the military, but become more manifest as people who train to be soldiers bond with each other. Several themes emerge as we examine these bonding rituals. Women entering the military must face the dilemma of sex and ‘sleeping around.’ Women are pushed away if they engage in sex, but they are equally pushed away if they do not.

### *5.3 Locker Room Talk*

The guys, you couldn't win. I found the guys, if you didn't put out they hated you because you were like, you ain't getting nothing off her. Or if you did put out you were a ground sheet and don't talk to her. So either way, this is what I find with women in the infantry, it sucks to be a woman for that reason. - Rebecca

A term that continues to surface in conversations with both men and women is “regimental ground sheet.” In normal circumstances, this term refers to a piece of equipment that a soldier uses to put between the ground and sleeping bag and/or air mattress<sup>7</sup>. As the term kept emerging in interviews, however, it clearly meant something else. When I inquired about this, Gregory explains that, “basically, okay, what I heard has only been addressed to a female. I haven't heard it addressed to a male. Basically, she would lie down for anyone, anyone can have a go at her...she was like the platoon whore,

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The ground sheet may also be used to construct a shelter termed a lean-to, otherwise commonly called a hoochie. It is a piece of equipment used, as required, to best benefit the soldier.

a company whore.” He continues to say that “girls sleep around and they like, bang guys in the army, they are part of the routine and bang guys, or guys bang them, whatever you call it.” This term does not refer to male soldiers who engage in sexual activity. When men adopt this term ‘regimental ground sheet’ and use it in their conversations, they reenact their power over women. In this instance, “power manifests itself in many forms of harassment of women, such as sexual gestures, innuendos, jokes and remarks which remind women of their vulnerability and subordinate status as sex objects” (Hester, 1992, p.14). But what happens if women transgress these boundaries?

There are other issues around sex that arise when women enter the military. It is thought that many of these women succumb to the pre-existing stereotype that military women are ‘loose’ or promiscuous. As Oliver points out, “yes, you do get girls who go away on their QL2 and become ground sheets. Like whores. They will screw anything with legs.” He continues to say that, “Some girls go from . . . they take innocence and throw it out the window and become whore-ish. That’s what happened, they take up the guy mentality.” When Oliver states that women “take up the guy mentality” we may assume that women are attempting to fit into the regime by becoming more male, more masculine, or perhaps, women feel this is liberation.

Men exhibit this masculinity because their sexual exploits bring men closer together and unite them. However, while men express their sexuality in this way, women who demonstrate the same actions are accorded the label “loose.” Despite explanations for why people adopt this behaviour the outcome is the same, unfavourable.

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Interestingly, some women interviewed held similar beliefs to the men. Samantha agrees that, "women in the military, 90 per cent are not good. When I met some of the girls in the other battalion, there was a girl who was there banging everybody." Another respondent, Erin, said "I keep my distance from other women because I want to know if they are there to try or . . . I mean, I knew of a girl who just joined up for the guys and when it got to the point where she had to do push-ups and ruck marches she got out. So it is hard to know why the women are there. Is she there for the guys?" This sentiment was echoed by Tracy when she confirms that, "there were other girls who slept around the whole time. I can understand why they were in."

While masculinity is about the drive for power and for domination, women, as a group, do not hold the same power. Both men and women internalize gendered order. As a woman you may choose not to be promiscuous. This may be due to the presence of a significant other or personal preference. Either reason will disassociate you from the men. As well, if you are a woman, you are told that nice girls do not sleep around - much. An antiquated notion is that women must save their virginity for their husbands. However, there is still the suggestion that women should be in a monogamous relationship before entering a sexual one. Furthermore, only certain types of girls sleep around with multiple partners and they are skanky, dirty, or whorish. As a result, the women who do choose to have sex are seen in a vastly different light than the men. This double standard not only draws boundaries between men and women, but also between the women themselves. This distance erodes the unity between female soldiers, and is further exacerbated since

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some women, like their male counterparts, are consumed by the prejudice that women enter the military to access a new dating pool of men.

Some believe that sex is a tool to gain promotion. Oliver believes women “are less than noble in their pursuits of improvement of their career.” This theme emerges from interviews with women as well. Denise said, “You’re a girl and you only got where you are because you slept your way there, which is what a lot of girls do. But I know that some girls have done it and that’s how they got promoted.” Erin shares this opinion and admits that “there are girls like that who try to advance their careers by sleeping with the key people.” There is a perception that women who advance among the ranks use sex as a tool to accomplish this. As a result, women who have been successful experience negative backlash from men and other women, causing frustration and even more obstacles to integration. Tracy was offered a course and “this guy wasn’t anything to me but he said, ‘Yeah, well, we know how she got that.’” At times sex is a tool, an item to barter. It is thought a woman’s ability is not sufficient enough to receive promotion or to gain a seat in a sought after course. Sex is power but, in this instance, it is used differently, as a kind of countervailing power for some women. Underneath, this power is limited and further serves men’s integration. Women are driven away, rendering them powerless. As barriers increase some females may use their sexual appearance in an effort to gain acceptance.

Leadership is fundamental if the military is to achieve the desired goal of complete and successful integration of women. Every level, particularly the level where



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integration is taking place requires knowledgeable, proactive and efficient leadership.

When one respondent was questioned about the relationships that develop between those in charge and the recruits, she discussed an incident where “these Sergeants and Master Corporals got these girls drunk . . . and they were just recruits and they took off to a hotel and they did their thing.” While personal relationships are permitted depending on circumstance and position, it is indeed frowned upon when they occur between superiors and subordinates within the same chain of command. It is considered inappropriate because it can negatively impact on unit cohesion and erode respect for those involved.

Erin discusses the implications of the development of personal relationships. She addresses the favouritism that other troops perceive, “because the instructor favours her and is dating her or whatever, she is getting special treatment.” Once there is a relationship it is thought that favouritism is inevitable. This was also addressed by another female respondent who said, “the way the instructors interact with them [female recruits] will probably be a little more joking with the girl than with the guy. You know a little more lenient with the girl than the guy and depending on the girl, if she’s attractive...you know like flirting or whatever, you know, it’s there.” Erin illustrates this underlying theme, “how can you respect your instructor when he’s got this fling going on with one of the girls?” While women attempt to succeed in the military environment, the responsibility lies predominantly with those in leadership positions to maintain their professionalism and not to engage in sexual relationships with recruits. Furthermore, recruits have trust in their superiors and that trust is easy to misuse.

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Another respondent discusses her confusion following an incident at a local bar while on course, "we went out to a bar and one guy had me in the corner trying to get his hands up my shirt. He was . . my staff and I'm one of his troops and he's not supposed to be like that...so this other master corporal came over and rescued me . . . low and behold we were in the cab and he had his arm around me and was trying to kiss me." Those in leadership positions, rightly or wrongly, are respected and trusted by those under their command. When those in leadership positions advance on recruits, it might stem from the leaders' desire to exercise power over those in ways that are not possible during training.

When you are a recruit, the staff in charge dictates everything. As Lorne states when he was asked about personal relationships between staff and recruits,

You [the instructor] are the first thing they see in the morning and the last thing that they see at night. You're in charge of their discipline, their administration, their rules, you do all that stuff for them. What I found is that they will do anything for you and I mean anything. You get misguided infatuation...you have to be aware of that and understand it for what it is, it's not your fucking good looks.

Clearly the responsibility of those in leadership positions is to create an atmosphere altogether more conducive to both women and to more humane values. It is unfortunate that some leaders misuse their power and are poor examples. The repercussions of such individuals are endless. Indeed, it must be realized for what it is and those in leadership positions must take responsibility and deal with the situations professionally if integration is to succeed.

#### *5.4 Conduct Unbecoming*

As male soldiers maintain their masculinity, men display their power through sex talk and displays of sexual prowess. It has been shown that “there is one form of violence, as a control, used in the oppression of women which does not occur in other systems of oppression. This is the construction and use of male sexuality as social control: through rape, sexual murder, sexual harassment in the street, at home and at work, the sexual abuse of children, 90 per cent of whom are girls, obscene telephone calls and so on, women are intimidated and constantly reminded that they are seen as inferior and are punished for being women” (Coveney et al., 1984, p.13). This extreme form of male sexuality occurs when higher ranks engage in sexual relations with recruits and when male soldiers openly discuss sexual conquests that include sexual misconduct<sup>8</sup>. This constitutes a new form of sexual harassment in the military. This is not only seen as immoral, but is also illegal. The following incident was discussed in an interview with a female respondent:

I was in there trying to sleep and the guys were talking about sex, and like I said, I thought I heard it all, like no big deal. Right? And they started making a list of everyone they've done, names included and all the stuff that they've seen. I don't know, there's gross, there's perverted and then there's something beyond that...but there was 5 or 6 guys that were talking and what they were talking about literally made me sick inside. I never felt this way before in my entire life....I don't know...it didn't have anything to do with me but it was...it was about different women and it made me so sick inside I thought that I was going to have to get up and get my kit and talk to the guys outside and say take me home. I'm getting out

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Sexual misconduct includes, (but is not limited to) actual or attempted rape or sexual assault (Adams-Roy, 1999, p. 9).

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of here, I don't care what you do to me. It was one huge tent and we all had cots, there were...girls on the opposite side but the guys were talking about...I don't know...one of them was talking about how him and this girl was making out and he would...they were out behind the mall or something...and something stupid...like he would pull her shirt up over her head and make out with her and the other guys would come out and see her tits, or feel them or do whatever, and she didn't know.

The one that really got to me was...this guy was talking about how he used to make his girlfriend get naked on the bed and four of his friends used to come in and do whatever they wanted to her and she used to be crying. And that's what got me. She didn't want to do it and he used to make her.

This topic of conversation is disturbing. It is questionable why this dialogue would even occur when men and women are sleeping under the same shelter. That this is taking place in the military context is significant in terms of my research. The military rewards such behaviour as men bond over their sexual conquests. Further, the disrespect toward women is clear,

They were talking about it and one of the guys piped up, you got to stop talking about that we have girls in the tent. But they said, yeah but they're asleep or they would have said something.

Reactions to such talk is inevitable. Here one soldier attempts, although somewhat halfheartedly, to stop the situation. However, would it matter if there were no women present? This sexual culture exists in the military, even before women enter. While harassment policies have been formalized, they are unable to challenge deeply ingrained mores of the culture and gendered patterns of behaviour will continue. The respondent continues to discuss the implications of such talk,

I was so sick inside I just didn't know what to do. Like I'll say if something bothers me and I will say to them to shut up, you're being assholes. But I just

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didn't know how to respond to it. It was too far. I didn't know how to deal with, it made me so sick. It got to be the lowest point.

The impact of that conversation is clear. It offends this soldier and reasserts her inferior status. Meanwhile, she must perform the following day with the same soldiers who view women as sexual objects. At the same time, the men partaking in the conversation are bonding. Friendship is the reward for the behaviour of the individual. These rewards are evident when the respondent said,

Everyone was laughing. They thought it was hilarious. Not everyone, but these 5 or 6 guys. They were saying what they did and then another guy would pipe in, yeah, well, I did this. You know. Saying stuff like, she can give some pretty good head. I have heard stuff like that before and it doesn't bother me to the extreme. Like I said, when you're a minority with all men you're going to hear stuff. But I mean, this stuff was to the extreme. But like, that was..It really got to me. I don't know how to approach it. I never got up out of bed. I was...thinking that they were going to talk about me, I was listening to hear if they were going to bring up my name because they were talking about everybody. The company ground sheets. But they never. I don't know if they thought I was there and that I might be awake. I don't know. But they did say, I wouldn't want my girlfriend to be in the military. You know, we would never be able to talk about all this stuff. It was just, it really got to me.

There are some topics of conversation that are considered permissible, even if they are inappropriate. However, the sexual misconduct in this conversation is not only inappropriate, but nauseating to the woman concerned. One female respondent asserts that there is "a line, and you can allow certain degrees, there's like a gray area and you can let it go." However, this discussion revolves around rape, a disgusting and inhumane act. Not to mention a chargeable offense. Rape is an act of sexual violence against women and "is the ultimate expression of a patriarchal order, a crime that epitomizes women's

oppressed status by proclaiming, in the loudest possible voice, the most degrading truths about women that a hostile world has to offer" (Cahill, 2001, p.2).

These men discuss the violent act of rape, an act that historically connects to the military. Enloe states that while rape is not exclusive to men as the actors, "it may be there are aspects of the military institution and ideology which greatly increase the pressure on militarised men to 'perform' sexually, whether they have a sexual 'need' or emotional feelings or not" (1983, p. 35). Enloe continues that these aspects include the pressures "to conform to the standards of 'masculine' behaviour" (1983, p. 35). It may also be a result of the need to be a part of a family, or the unit or platoon. A soldier can "only earn buddies by proving he is a 'man', that he isn't squeamish in the face of violence and rape is seen as a violent act" (1983, p. 36).

In the above situation, manhood and the boasting of sexual conquests is for the approval of the other men. Further, the discussion renders heterosexuality compulsory and masculinity all powerful. The effect of sexual harassment, more specifically in this instance rape, undermines women's confidence and reinforces their sense of inferior status. It induces a timid and careful response to men (Coveney et al., 1984, p.19). This particular respondent, usually an outspoken woman, could not find her voice. This is not surprising when considering the link between the military and sexual violence discussed earlier. This is an institution whose military training and ideology actually encourages such behaviour, and it is clear that it must be dealt with.

If not dealt with these incidences will continue to occur. Another female respondent discusses a similar incident that a fellow soldier told her about:

I know this girl who was working one summer and there were all these regular force guys around her, I can't quite remember her job. Her and this driver kinda got along. She was out one day and where they were it started to rain, they were with these other regular force guys, so they all got inside this tank together to stay dry, anyway, it was fine. She didn't feel weird at first because she was the only female in this little tank with 5 other guys. But then it got weird.

The b'ys were talking and the only person she knew was the driver and they were sitting down in this confined space and she was telling me, 'It wasn't like I could get out and walk away. They started to talk about rape. They were saying, now this is a perfect place now that we could rape someone. You could tie her hands over there and her ankle here and her other ankle there...and we could all bang fuck her and no one would know because they would never hear her scream and we all got an alibi because we could all pick up for each other. And no one would ever know.' She said, 'I never felt so uncomfortable in my life. I was just sitting there and I wasn't saying anything, but I was super uncomfortable, I just got out and stood in the rain. I didn't know what else to do'. The driver said to her after, 'don't mind them, they're assholes'. She said she didn't know how to deal with it.

The threat of rape “ as a means of social control has the effect of restricting where women may go, what women may do, serves to ‘keep us in our place’ which is subordinate to men, and thereby helps to maintain male domination over women” (Coveney et al., 1984, p.24). Initially, it may seem like this is an extreme case, but is it? Major Adams-Roy discusses sexual harassment in *Harassment in the Canadian Forces: Results of the 1998 Survey*. CF Regular Force personnel reported that sexual teasing, jokes and remarks were the most common type of sexual harassment (86%). The next common behaviours were sexually suggestive body language (56%) and sexual talk creating an intimidating environment (53%). However, disturbingly, one person reported actual or attempted rape

or sexual assault (3%) (1999, p. 17). All personnel undergoing initial training up to and including MOC (Military Occupation Code) training in Spring 1998, including personnel attending RMC (Royal Military College), responded that sexual teasing, jokes and remarks, sexual talk creating an intimidating environment, and sexually suggestive body language were the most common forms of harassment. Disturbingly, two females and one male reported actual or attempted rape or sexual assault (1999, p. 44)<sup>9</sup>. The evidence illustrates similar data found in the current research. Similar to this study, women are subject to the most common types of sexual harassment. Further, women are also acutely aware of the threat of rape. All these factors contribute to the intimidating environment indicating that women are not welcome.

### *5.5 The Happy Medium*

There are however, men who do support the integration of women and do not consider sex a problem. When asked about becoming involved in personal relationships and the conflict that might develop from that, Ken remarks, "As long as you avoid that conflict, as long as you do that, then it shouldn't be a problem." Jonah also states that "it can cause problems in the workplace. It can and it does. I wouldn't do it, even if it was a girl I really liked." Some male soldiers sidestep potential problems because they are aware of the potential impact of fraternization and choose to see women as soldiers,

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The sample sizes for both Canadian Forces personnel and trainees for these items is small, making it difficult to detect any existing significant differences between these groups for these items.



rather than as sexual objects to conquer.

When one respondent was asked about the different obstacles that arise due to sexual harassment, he was very clear in his views. Lorne comments that “there are ignorant fucks that don’t know any better. You got to get over those people, ignore them, and keep your mind focussed on being a good soldier and doing your job. Regardless of who you are. That’s what is important. Things are never easy so learn to drive on and dig in and be tough.” While some males maintain outdated, but common, views that continue to hinder women’s integration into the military, there are some male soldiers, such as Lorne, who choose to be proactive and attempt to challenge the old stereotypes.

Interestingly, the resistance Lorne refers to is not new. In the past, “racial integration was opposed by whites with vehement hostility and rhetoric similar to what is...directed against lesbian/gay integration” (Rimmerman, 1996, p. 25). Commonly, change in the military is met with resistance. Arguments used in opposition to other groups resurface. Whether it is blacks or homosexuals or women a common dispute claims that each threatens the efficiency of the military, further “to survive in a killing field, a warrior has to believe he’s invincible...to think that way, he has to be macho. Fairly or unfairly, gays threaten that macho...and from that moment, the unit goes to hell” (Rimmerman, 1996, p. 53). However, the military has accepted blacks, homosexuals and now, with time, women will also be accepted.

Despite the difficulties, some women are integrating and adjusting. While as yet there is insufficient research on this important topic, my research indicates that women

are beginning to construct their own culture. There are other rituals that women perform that forge an independence. An example of this ritual is women coming together during physical training. Alison reveals that, "if one of us did a pull-up it was a big deal, we would be clapping and stuff." This is a clear illustration that "shows how groups [that] lack power collectively, define their positions and use their informal relations to adapt to or resist powerlessness" (Anderson, 1993, p. 132) and creates new boundaries that include women rather than exclude them.

### *Conclusion*

Masculinity is manifested in many different ways. The research findings of this study focus on the use of put-downs and the threat of sexual and physical harassment. The definition of manhood here "is a man with power and a man of power. We equate manhood with being strong, successful, capable, reliable, in control. The very definitions of manhood we have developed in our culture maintain the power that some men have over other men and that men have over women" (Kuypers, 1997, p.89). This is intensified in the military since it is the last male bastion. Borrowdale observes "this is men's territory and men resist women's intrusion" (1991, p. 9). Although women are now welcome into this male-dominated arena, this underlying theme is still present. Nevertheless, while some men attempt to maintain power as they maintain masculinity, other men see women as capable and do not see exclusive behaviour as necessary. Women learn to be tough and to deal with certain comments, but what about when men step over the line and create an atmosphere of sexual and physical harassment? The next

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chapter will discuss the tools in place for women in the military to deal with such situations when they arise.

## Chapter 6: The "H" Word

### *Introduction*

In 1988, the Canadian Forces promulgated an order on personal harassment that clearly states that they do not tolerate harassment. In this chapter, I demonstrate the need for these policies, a need for protection of women against sexual harassment. Research, conducted by Major Adams-Roy, clearly demonstrates that harassment in the workplace has negative effects on personal well-being, which may be particularly hard for those women attempting to survive in an already alien environment (1999, p. 56). This chapter explores formal policies and training tools to eliminate harassment in the military. While these policies have potential to assist in this task, they also provide ammunition for those who desire to abuse it. I address frustration felt by instructors about those who misuse the policy. Further, alternative methods must be developed to complement and assist this policy. The gendered order of the institution and the role of those in leadership positions are key factors in making the policy succeed.

### *6.1 The Benefits*

A lot of this stuff comes from the management of it. It depends on how you deal with it if it becomes an issue or not. I mean, I always go with the fact that women don't want to be treated differently, so don't treat them differently. That's the way I see it. That's the way I've always dealt with it. If there is anything to deal with...and there's nothing to deal with. They're no fucking different. Treat them like everyone else and they'll be happy. - Lorne

Women and men enter the military with pre-conceived expectations. Both are aware that a high level of mental and physical toughness is essential in order to be

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successful. However, women entering this institution are still considered a new phenomenon and many are unsure how to behave. Some women and men believe this weakens the training through double standards; others regard this integration as a hindrance that no longer allows people to speak or act freely. The Canadian Forces' have allowed women to enter, but there has been concern about harassment stemming from several related occurrences. This concern precipitates the development of several tools for dealing with harassment. One of these tools is the formal document, *The Harassment Prevention and Resolution Guidelines*, that states,

DND and the CF are committed to providing a respectful workplace by promoting the prevention and prompt resolution of harassment. All members and employees have the right to be treated fairly, respectfully and with dignity in a workplace free of harassment, and they have the responsibility to treat others in the same manner. Harassment in any form constitutes unacceptable conduct that will not be tolerated. Any person who subjects another person to harassment may be subject to administrative and/or disciplinary action.

The CF provides harassment policy and SHARP (Standard for Harassment and Racism Prevention) training to demonstrate the commitment of the Department of National Defence (DND) toward ensuring a workplace free of harassment that provides for teamwork, mutual respect and fairness. As defined in this policy, harassment "comprises any objectionable act, comment or display that demeans, belittles or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment, or any act of intimidation or threat."

The power imbalance between employer and employee is felt in any institution. However, it is acute within the military, since supervisors have the power to dictate the details of daily living. Most importantly, in times of war, they can tell their subordinates

to kill another person or be killed. This power can be exercised to perform duties in an effective and efficient manner, however, it can also be abused. Lorne comments that “some people are just fucking socially retarded and just don’t know how to use their rank properly. That happens too. People need protection from those fucking idiots.” Some people in leadership positions abuse their power and Matthew discusses one example of this that occurred during basic training,

I saw some crazy stuff. I couldn’t believe it. It was harassment and degrading. One of the instructors in Halifax said to a guy on my course...this fellow Connors<sup>10</sup>. We were all at attention along the wall in a line. And one platoon was walking out and we were just there waiting for them to go by and one of the soldiers walked by and this Sergeant was down the hall and Connors, he didn’t move or anything but his eyes flicked down to the ground. His head was still front and this Sergeant saw and he lost it. He called him everything but a gentlemen. He called him a fag, “Are you a fag Connors?” And he was like, “No Sergeant” And he was like, “You want to screw that guy in the ass?” and he was like, “No Sergeant” He was like, “I think you’re a fag.” Like he was almost kissing Connors and the rest of us started to get mad. We thought there was no need. All he should’ve done was “why did you look down” and sort him out. Make him do drill or something. But what he did, Call him a fag and that was in front of everyone, the platoon walking by and everything. He wasn’t the best soldier but that wasn’t necessary. We thought that we should do something. But what do we do? The Sergeant didn’t have to do that. But nobody did anything. We all just kinda forgot about it.

Incidents like this confirm the need for a harassment policy for all military personnel. It also highlights the compulsory heterosexual masculine culture of this institution when the sergeant insults the soldier by accusing him of being a homosexual. The need for protection is evident. For women, the demand is particularly acute. As women attempt to integrate, education and awareness can solve various difficulties they may encounter.

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<sup>10</sup> Connors is not the real name.

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Formal harassment policy and SHARP training can provide this education and awareness.

An example that illustrates the need for such policies was given by Bonnie. She discusses an instructor she encountered previously ,

It [his behaviour] had been going for his entire career. There was always two or three small, blonde people . . . that he always really liked. Oh yeah, he was a piece of work. Basically, he was a jerk. A lot of things, I think in his mind, were fun but he was a pig . . . well, he did things you would expect a teenager to do in highschool, like pick someone up and throw them in a garbage can or make lewd comments in the wrong situations. A lot of stuff like that and if you didn't show any signs of fighting back the comments would go further, I don't know of any physical contact, but yeah, he was a pig . . . he made a lot of people extremely uncomfortable, especially when he was the person writing your staff report. I've seen people come out after reading their staff reports crying. Basically it came down that if his name was at the bottom of your report it meant nothing because everyone knew. Finally, some people he was harassing started documenting and it came against him. He's still a Captain. He is still in the system but is now with the artillery . . . he is like Teflon, everything slides off of him.

Another respondent, Tracy, discusses a different area of contention. She claims that "Even if you're involved in a conversation [with male soldiers] it becomes a big joke to shut up about certain issues [such as topics involving sex etc.] simply because I am there [taking part in the conversation]." Tracy's comment appears to be of a less serious nature than the one discussed above; nevertheless, it relays an uncomfortable experience.

These actions can hinder teamwork and affect morale. Other areas of contention involve issues of space. When Pamela attended a course the male soldiers sat together but not with her. She said that "no one wants to sit with me because I am a girl. It is so wrong." Ostracism due to sex will hinder work effectiveness and, while such incidences may seem minor, they remain harmful. This is a form of retaliation women experience

when entering a male domain. These patterns of social interaction may often result in other more serious types of exclusionary practices.

In Chapter 5, there were many references to intolerable sexual harassment, including the incident involving the lone female and her male counterparts seeking refuge from the weather inside a tank. Awareness of the formal policies will assist in the prevention of harassment, whether it is sexual, physical or verbal. It might stifle incidents such as the one discussed by Samantha, “this girl walked in with this low cut dress on and the guys kinda looked at her and said, ‘Oh, here comes our regimental ground sheet.’” Other examples of sexual harassment include an incident experienced by Rebecca, who relates that “one of the guys looked at me and he was very serious and he said, ‘Rebecca, do my dishes.’ And I punched him in the gut as hard as I could. I didn’t care, I didn’t care who saw me, we did not get along. I can handle jokes about women, whatever, but he was serious, ‘Rebecca, you should be doing my dishes.’ And I was like, oh, you piece of shit.” This particular male soldier had made similar comments in the past and continued to do so until Rebecca took physical action to stop it. Stereotypes evoke such comments and they can linger in the workplace, causing an atmosphere of demoralization.

The harassment policy is clear and naming the behaviour is an important part of the effort to challenge the actions that isolate women. However, these changes cannot be merely cosmetic and must delve deeper within the male culture of the institution. Nevertheless, while policies cannot change opinions, they can modify actions. The male culture and persisting opinions that permeate this organization are further illustrated by



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Samantha's experience. While attending a course Samantha was called over by a male sergeant who yelled, "Spit for me. Can you spit? Act like a man, you're in the infantry, you need to be more tough. If you were in my platoon you would fail, you would never pass your [course], spit for me!" Not only does this comment directly affect this female soldier, it reflects the image of the male soldier held by the Captain – an image of toughness that may be unfair to all soldiers.

An awareness of the sexual harassment policies will bring a consciousness to the soldiers. While it might not change some current opinions, it will educate soldiers on what is no longer acceptable; furthermore, it might lead to opinion changes in the next generation of male soldiers. Tracy expresses her desire, "I don't think the women have to change it [attitude]. I don't think it is the women's problem, it is the men's. Attitudes must be changed." A policy can educate those who read it and are aware of it and may challenge the ideologies of the institution.

When those in charge implement the harassment policy the consensus is that it will impose fairness. Lorne considers his actions and said that, "no one gets special treatment above or below the board. That's the way I try to approach it. You're not always perfect but you try to remember that. It [harassment] used to happen and it isn't fucking right." Lorne's awareness is encouraging. It is also promising that, throughout my research, there were other soldiers who share Lorne's views. While some of these did not participate in the current study, it was evident through personal interaction and conversation that they shared Lorne's opinion. One of these soldiers was Jonah, who

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emphasizes that “if you hear some member of your team say a racial slur then the team is weakened. It can be sexist too.” He also voices another positive application of the policy when he adds that “the best way to deal with the problem is directly, one on one, at first. That’s what we’re told and I think it is a good idea.” While not all feedback on the policy is positive, there are some positive results due to the education of soldiers. It is questionable why such a remarkably well-written policy would not receive such high praise as it was originally thought it would.

### *6.2 The Inevitable Failures*

Among respondents, negative comments seem to outweigh positive feedback on harassment policies. Some of the respondents took the training lightly. Tracy asserts that “everyone thought it [SHARP training] was a joke.” Likewise, Bonnie said she found the training itself, “harassing. If they made me do one more bout of SHARP training I was going to put in a redress<sup>11</sup> on it.” There was also the opinion that the policy adversely impacts training. This was echoed by Pamela who observed that “all of a sudden, you are in two categories because you’re scared of offending somebody, and on the other side of it, the ones being trained are taking advantage of it.” Men share the opinions of these women soldiers. Ken comments that, “it [SHARP training] was a bit of a joke back then

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A Canadian Forces member may apply for redress of grievance related to an alleged harassment situation. The redress of grievance may be filed as an alternative to the harassment complaint procedure provided under CFAO 19-39, or if the member is dissatisfied with either the procedure or results of any action taken under that policy.

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and people tried to get out of doing it.”Also, Gregory said that he felt “harassed just getting the training. The troops will say that they feel harassed because they are getting SHARP training again.” With regards to the implications of SHARP on routine training, Lorne comments that “we’re losing our ability to punish people or maintain discipline.”

Why would a policy that is merely attempting to protect people result in such negative implications? A closer look at the SHARP documents is necessary. The

*Harassment Prevention and Resolution Guidelines* state that,

Every individual in DND and the CF has a right to have any incident of harassment dealt with in an expeditious, impartial and sensitive manner and without fear of retaliation. However, this right should not interfere with, or restrict in any way, supervisors exercising their responsibilities to maintain order and discipline in the workplace.

The harassment policy is thought to interfere with training by evoking fear in instructors. Some are afraid that a recruit might cry the “H” word, harassment, rendering the instructors, or those in leadership positions, ineffective. This was discussed informally amongst staff, but it has not been formally addressed. While the policy has taught people to be careful about what they say or how they act, one of the respondents expressed the opinion that it has also “empowered small-minded people with a tool to use against someone that they don’t like and with no recourse.” One respondent discusses his experience as an instructor who was falsely accused,

This individual [a recruit on course], he couldn’t do a drill lecture and he was failing the course for his inability to teach a drill lecture. He just couldn’t remember the sequence. I would sit down with him. Fuck man, how much help did we give him. I tell you I was his section commander and I was over to his

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shack two or three hours a night going over this material with him. Now this is my off time. I would go over there to help him. I was very dedicated as an instructor. Geez, we tried and tried and he ended up failing. Against my recommendations, to give this guy another try, basically, they kicked him off the course. He had failed the attempt three times. I was forgiving because he never had any problems with any other parts of the course. On the other subjects he was a fair to fucking good student.

It is clear here that the instructor did everything he could to assist the recruit. He even attempts to help the recruit outside of class time.

On his way out, he wrote up a statement to the CO that number one, I used foul language on him, which I admitted that I probably did. And the next one was out to lunch. He said that he failed his last lesson this one day and he had only one more opportunity to do it again the next day. If he failed that he was off the course. The day he failed I went to his shack, I was on my way to the gym, I went over and said let's get some practice in here. You got one more kick at the cat and if you fail this you're off the course tomorrow. So let's start practicing. He said okay. He was very upset and I could tell. I said, if you're upset why don't you grab a coffee and relax for an hour or two. Don't think about nothing, don't try to learn it just relax. When I come back we'll get at it. Until that time, take it easy. At the time, his wife was in the building and he wasn't supposed to have her in there. He was confined to barracks and he was on course. So I said, tell you what, go down to Tim Horton's, which he wasn't allowed to but I gave him permission to, run down to Tim Horton's with your wife and in two hours I'll meet you back here and we'll carry on. He said okay and off he went.

At this point, it is clear that not only is the instructor attempting to teach the recruit the required information, his concern is for the recruit's well-being. Despite being confined to barracks the recruit was given special permission by the instructor to take time to leave his quarters in the company of his wife.

His accusation was that as he was walking out to the car, I stuck my head out the window and yelled out to him, Where the fuck do you think you're going, you fucking shit-head...something like this. This is what he accused me of anyway. It was unfounded. I was cleared of all the fucking charges or allegations whatever you want to call it. But I mean for the three weeks that it took them to do that

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investigation I was useless as an instructor. I couldn't even talk to the other students. I was completely fucked.

He went beyond his responsibilities as an instructor to assist a recruit and his reward is a false accusation of harassment. As a result, his self-confidence is shaken. This interferes with his abilities and for the duration of the investigation he was ineffective as an instructor.

It really is a bad fucking way to be. And I was not very fucking proud of it, either. I ended up going to my boss and saying take me off the fucking schedule, I can't fucking teach anymore. I'm not going to. Now come on b'y, [his superior said] don't let it get you down, well, now, I can't help it [the instructor responded] . I can't fucking help it. I am useless as an instructor right now to anybody. I'm not teaching any more lessons until all this shit is over with.

This incident demonstrates how soldiers can take advantage of the new policies on harassment. They can be misused for less than honourable reasons. This example also illustrates the repercussions for an instructor who went above and beyond his duty to help a soldier, only to find that he had become a target. This instructor became discouraged and disillusioned, and was no longer able to teach for the duration of the investigation. Not only was the policy misused, the wave of implications multiplied, and the repercussions were numerous.

Similar sentiments about policy misuse were echoed by Denise who concludes that, "most of the time a lot of the people that are charging people are really the ones that are guilty." As a result of the manipulation of harassment policies, distorted speculations arise and damaging comments are made. False accusations occur and many are

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unfounded. As a result, the policy is misused and its original goals difficult to achieve.

This was also discussed by other soldiers. Tracy comments that, "I think that some instructors are afraid to say anything to any girls. They might be brought up on charges."

Similarly, Bonnie said that "the staff was terrified. The staff were extremely terrified.

They didn't know how to treat females . . . they dealt with us with kid gloves. Yeah, they would yell but not what they were yelling at the guys for, obviously so. Extremely obvious. If you had something wrong with your uniform they'd still tell you about it and throw in a couple of curses but they would ream the guys out for five minutes." Hence, the legitimacy of the formal policy comes under question and is held up to ridicule. This undermines the effectiveness of the policy and is a clear example of Weber's unintended social consequence of a social action.

This problem was illustrated by comments from another male respondent who suggests that "there are people who use it as a tool to avoid being jacked up, to avoid being responsible for their actions, is the way that I see it. There is such an aura of fear around it, and the stigma is attached. The minute you're accused of it [harassment] you cease to become effective." Erin discusses another incident where this policy is misused,

I know of an instance a couple of years ago, there was this instructor . . . and he was a corporal. He had been a higher rank, from what I understand, but because of alcohol and things, he had been dropped in rank. Like, he'd had a little encounter with an instructor, or an officer, or something. Anyway, he was pretty bitter and you know, his whole attitude, nobody really liked him. And he was in [the training center] teaching . . . and he wasn't a very pleasant man, like you know really, personality wise and nobody liked him. And the girls got it into their heads that we can get rid of him, if we want to. And they spoke to the guys as well, and they had basically contrived this story where I think something happens where one of

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the guys was smoking in bed and, obviously, that's a major fire hazard, so it's not allowed. But basically, they contrived some story and, basically, because of the story, like as soon as something like that comes up, an investigation starts. And if a person is under investigation, they're automatically taken away from that. In that case, from that section, I think he was 2IC, second in command. So he was taken off that section and they were like, like, they were totally thrilled. Like, their plan worked and you know they got it. So it is abused, telling people what their rights, like you know what I mean. Like, just to let them know the power they have. Like, it's so abused.

Yeah . . . then like when something like that really does happen . . . but you know just because they want to get him like they didn't want him as their second in command. Like, they basically got rid of him, right. So anyway, I guess his career basically ended after that, 'cause for where he'd been in trouble before and, you know, he wasn't in good standing and everything else. I think he was basically told, either turn in your kit and voluntarily quit or resign type thing, or action will be taken to have you forced out.

This story demonstrates the lasting implications of misusing the harassment policy.

Another male respondent said that once someone says they have been harassed, "I am now the guilty one and you, you pulled the big 'H' Harassment. Don't blink around her, don't say boo. Don't say anything about women around her. Then all of a sudden people are walking on eggshells around you. Afraid to touch you. Because I am the one being investigated now. Even if I prove it and nothing is done. The aura around harassment is so individually huge and big these days, I'm rendered basically ineffective and I probably won't talk to you again, never look at you again. They will take you out of my section and put you in another."

Harassment policies are helping to identify problems. Clearly, this legislation cannot fix some problems, but if the harassment policies are clarified, without leaving

room for misinterpretation, success is possible. Those who misuse the policy must be aware there will be serious implications. These implications must be created, defined and enforced. Policies do have the potential to detect problems, but those in leadership positions will foster the changes necessary to deal with the issues raised earlier. These policies are not sufficient on their own and the military must consider leadership in the context of the institution that they are attempting to change. Bacchi discusses the issue of harassment within another institution, the university. She states that, "not only must the male psychology be considered, but also the institution in its entirety" (1998, p. 79). Bacchi continues to say that universities "are gendered at their core and that, hence, universities are the problem with sexual harassment a symptom of that problem. Clearly in this understanding, the 'problem' of sexual harassment cannot be addressed without addressing the gendered character of the institution" (1998, p. 79). This analysis parallels women's experience with the military. Until 1989, the duty to protect the country was formally men's responsibility. This duty is associated with "presumed masculine characteristics of aggressiveness and physical strength...[that] in the presence of women upsets some of these assumed configurations." (Bacchi, 1998, p. 80).

Once again the gendered character of this institution must be revisited. The infantry is trained to kill other human beings, and basic training is a place for recruits to be broken down and built back up into people who are aggressive and who can handle the act of killing. Intimidation is one method to do this. It is possible to train an individual without swearing or making accusations of sexuality or race, but the military code implies



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there must be a certain amount of humiliation, embarrassment, or intimidation. This has been a training method of the military throughout history.

Soldiers must know who their superior is. There must be no question as to who is in charge when you are ordered to attack. There cannot be any hesitation. Training achieves this discipline. Alison declares that, “a part of it is your psychological, mental ability . . . you need to be stressed out and pushed to prepare you for the training.” This was echoed by Bonnie who agrees that, “you gotta be able to do it [follow orders] without thinking because you will have to do it in a panic situation and you won’t be able to think. This is another reason to stress people out while they are on a course, like QL3. If they can do it when they’re stressed out they can do it when they’re not.” Jonah also discusses the need for intimidation, “Like, what would you do if you were a POW? They are not going to come up to you and pat you on the head and say, come on, you got to go in your cell now. They’re going to give you a kick in the back and drive you into your cell. If you ever heard or read about the atrocities about what they do, listen to the refugees that come over, and hear about what they do to each other over in Bosnia. If you sign up to go and deal with that crap you need mental toughness which is developed by people screaming at you.” Samantha also discusses the need for intense training, “If he [instructor] asks you to do something you don’t stop to think about it, you do it. You’re not paid to ask questions or to think. You do what you’re told. If we were out there tomorrow on the front lines, obviously someone is doing the thinking and that is why we are doing what we’re doing, it has come down the chain of command and we were told to go do it and you do it.”

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The military must be brutal in its training because the acts it may need to perform are themselves brutal. The definition of harassment, as it stands, contradicts the very mandate of the organization it is trying to improve. If the policy is implemented without this consideration, it is destined to fail. Lorne sums this up best, "We are so full of shit these days that we have lost sight of what the Canadian Forces is for. I mean to lose your fighting edge, your mental toughness, your ability to close in and destroy the enemy. You talk about a harassment-free work environment! We have completely fucking lost it." The CF implemented a formal harassment policy without considering the depth of the organization it is attempting to reshape.

A memorandum dated 27 April, 2001, entitled *Land Force (LF) Interim Directive - Workplace Conflict Prevention and Resolution*, comments on Policy Application. Under the subheading *Interpretation/Amplification*, it states:

19. An important component of the harassment definition is the expression "directed at." For the purposes of this directive:

*Improper conduct is considered to be directed at another person when that person is (A) the subject of the conduct and (B) personally experiences the conduct and/or the repercussions thereof.*

Note - The following three scenarios will *assist in understanding* its application:

- a. a person overhears a conversation of which that person is subject or that person is a member of the group that is the subject of the conversation (i.e. race etc.). The improper conduct in the form of objectionable comments is therefore considered as being directed at this person;
- b. a person is subject of snickering, pointing and avoidance behaviour at work due to comments made by an individual during a coffee break. Though

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that person did not personally experience the comments, that person is experiencing the repercussions of the comments, therefore the conduct is considered as being directed at this person; and /or

c. a person overhears or is party to a conversation of which that person finds the topic to be offensive. Since that person is not the subject of that conversation or a member of the group that is the subject of conversation (i.e. sexual orientation etc.), this is not considered as being directed at.

Note: The supervisor or RO is nonetheless required to take expeditious action to correct this improper conduct as any other workplace conflict, by using other available means.

This policy paints a pleasurable picture of a workplace devoid of negative comments and petty gossip, but it clashes with the intimidation methods that train soldiers. Workers at other institutions are educated on harassment policies and they appear to be successful. However, the demands made by the harassment policy seem to contradict the essence of the military. This organization is one that kills, a very inhumane directive that is attempting to adopt humane values. It seems foolhardy to expect strict adherence and further, it seems laughable to expect the military, an organization that differs so greatly from civil society, to abide by rules that do not consider the military's mandate or the unique culture that evolves historically within. There are no scenarios presented discussing the training environment of the infantry. Rather, these are aimed specifically for the office environment. How can one set of rules be applied to these two entirely different environments? The policy is not a realistic expectation of what the military can attain.

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The policy could be manageable, but would need to be considered within the context in which it must be enacted, the infantry and the field environment. Lorne discusses policy implementation,

Like my views on the harassment policy, as it stands is good but it is the enforcement of it that I don't like. It is the same with women coming into combat roles, I have no problem with that but don't drop the standards, don't interpret things in a bad fucking way and create animosity.

The current harassment policy cannot be used as a simple blanket solution to complex problems. It must be interpreted in consideration of the institution's prevailing masculine culture, and be further clarified for varying training environments.

I was in Gagetown . . . and . . . The Minister of National Defence Committee on the Integration of Women in the Combat Arms was there. These were two women who reported directly to the Minister, and they were there to answer any questions that anyone had on anything. They were completely outside the armed forces and it was eye opening.

The policy was deemed ineffective in its mandate rather than assisting in positive change, but here was an opportunity to discuss the policy in consideration of the military, specifically the training environment.

They were there and the questions were flying. "Are we supposed to give them special tents?" No. "Are we supposed to bring women in [from the field] to shower every two days?" No. "What's the scoop with that?" Any woman that joins the infantry has to understand that hey, you put up with the same fucking thing that a man puts up with. That's it. And everyone was like, yes b'y. They were blown away. There will be no changes. And she was like, "my name is such and such and I am telling you." It was eye-opening. I was glad that I sat in on that because I am following it to this day. People try to argue with me but I can say I was there and I can tell you, this is what the policy is, not what you interpret it to be.

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Here the policy was discussed as it would be implemented within the military training regime. This would allow for a deeper consideration of the culture it was attempting to reshape.

That's the worst thing about a large organization. The bureaucracy, the policy can go through 4000 interpretations before it lands in front of you. It is terrible. It is not that things are bad but it is the interpretation. I am sure that there are old school guys who don't know any better, I am sure that there are some ignorant fucks but you got to do your job. Regardless of who you are and what you are. That's what's important. Any woman coming in now, that's what I would tell them. Things aren't always going to be rosy but you got to get over those things, it isn't rosy for anybody. Things are never rosy so learn to drive on and dig in and be tough. That's what it's all about. That's what I did.

The harassment policy has been used to paint a picture of civility that can be afforded in the office environment but not the field environment, those training for combat. Not everyone is cut out to be a member of an organization whose mandate is to close in and destroy the enemy. Humans are not socialized to engage in such behaviour and if you are not the type of person who can sustain such training, then The Regiment is not the place for you. Pamela discusses her experience,

We had a female one time come into the armories...she had just joined and one of the guys on the floor said something to her along the lines of getting her ruck and stuff. Pick up your f-ing legs or something like that. She was like, you can't talk to me like that. But he wasn't speaking to her personally, he was talking to the whole group. Anyway, she talked to a couple of people and they sent her up to me... and when she came in she told me what had happened. I tried to understand, I have heard this word for 20 years now, but I don't even know that word now. I said to her, "You can't just take the word, was it directed to you as you not doing your work or you to move a little faster?" And she said, "No, he talked to all of us like that." I could get it, I wanted to say, man why are you being so foolish, go on back down and do your stuff. That's me. Anyway, I said, "Well, I don't think you

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should think anything of it, it's just a phrase, it wasn't directed to you to upset you, I think you should just go back and do whatever." "No," she said, "I really didn't like it." I said to her, "All right, come with me" I took her to the landing and I walked her out and the big door was open and I said, "You know when you came into those big doors over there?" And she said, "Yes." "You know," I said, "the best thing for you is to go on back out those doors." And she looked at me, and I said, "Really, I don't think this is for you. You just came here and already you're offended by such a minor detail, when you get into your training this is going to be so heavy, I really don't think the military is for you." And she said to me, "You know, you're right." She went out that door and I never seen her after that. The guys came up and said, "What did you say to her?" And I said that I told her that I didn't think that the military was for her because she was too conscious of the little things and they would get heavier and I told her she should go right back out that door. "Good," they said. It was a blessing. She would have had market (a countless number) charges already, and this was when it was just starting.

Pamela's experience illustrates the very essence of military human nature during training. The mandate of the institution must not be forgotten. It is also clear that not everyone can perform such actions as killing other human beings. If this female recruit was in another occupation such language would be strictly prohibited. However, when in the military, and undergoing certain training, the policy must be considered within this specific context.

### *6.3 A Need to Augment*

The Criminal Code of Canada contains rules that society must abide by; many civilians know that it exists and are aware of its presence. People know some of the basic components of this discourse. In the military, the commanding officer must ensure that all recruits are aware of the existing harassment policies and is responsible for continually reinforcing the policies. Presently, if someone is accused and charged, the

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incident is published in routine orders. It must be communicated that false accusations are neither permitted nor taken lightly.

What can be done to achieve a harassment-free workplace? Introducing soldiers to official policies and educating them is a start. However, Pamela believes that training must remain at a high level, but a focus on teamwork will augment these policies, rather than constantly reminding troops of harassment policies. If discipline and training regimes remain high, it will force people to come together and overlook differences.

Pamela discusses her opinion on SHARP training,

SHARP is important...things need to be addressed with everybody, it is like, look at yourself first before you start looking at other people...We need each other. The message was great but you had to go into yourself and say did I do this? Every time we go on training we talk about it. We are not just there as an individual we are there to help each other. We have to help each other...when you get connected like that you are connected forever. If I can try someone else can try. We need each other's energy.

It was like, it's an attitude, if you feel that you can do it, try it but don't feel bad if you got to ask for help. In your civilian job do we ask for help? Does a guy ask for help? Really? Why is it in the military that it is not supposed to work that way. But it does work that way. If they see that everyone is doing the best that they can do. Then why not help each other? If you don't work as a team and I said that to them, if you don't work as a team you got nothing. It don't matter what rank you are, you could have the stars up on your shoulder you won't go anywhere, it won't be nothing because you never had nothing in the first place. You never had that camaraderie, that feeling that we can do it.

I mean, I helped males, everybody is not going to be able to do everything. It doesn't matter if you are male or female. We all are people and we all have quirks about us and there are some things that we can't do. That is why we have males and females to help each other. It's not because I am a female and I need help. Is it because you're a male and you don't need it? Are you too proud to ask for help because you are a male? Because society has got you stipulated that you are the

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one that is going to make it? Excuse me, but, the big picture is going to show differently and we need each other.

A harassment free workplace will not occur simply because legislation dictates it should. The implications of the policy have been numerous, both good and bad. However, rather than cutting out the practices of the past, the positive aspects should remain intact. This was stressed by Lorne when he said, "I don't think we are learning how to take the good things from the past and bring them forward. I think that's where the issue is. Just because a method is old doesn't mean it is bad or ineffective."

#### *Conclusion*

The Canadian Forces (CF) have clearly stated that harassment will not be tolerated. Herein, incidents have been provided that demonstrate the need for such policies and training. It has been argued that harassment in the workplace results in negative effects on personal well-being, morale and motivation. Formal policies and training implementation were examined to identify problems that may be preventing effectiveness. At present, the policy does not provide a fair and respectable workplace. The policy must be closely scrutinized, with a deeper consideration of the gendered order of the institution and the role of those in leadership positions for its current applicability. In addition, consideration must be given to the unintended social consequences of this document. Similarly, the policy must be examined for clarity as regards the interpretation of harassment and action taken when harassment, or false accusations, occur in the training environment. It is clear that the CF has come far in addressing harassment. However, when considering the



incidents discussed previously that were not filed as official complaints, it is equally clear that the CF must continue to strive toward their goal of a harassment-free workplace.

## Chapter 7: Conclusion

### *7.1 Theoretical Summary*

The current research explores the commitment of Canadian Forces leadership to gender integration, and the consequences and experiences of the women who choose to enter the reserve unit, The Royal Newfoundland Regiment. A grounded theory approach to this sociological investigation is taken. It is clear that data collection, analysis, and theory work together. This approach is grounded in data about women and men in the military. An understanding of the social system in question is obtained by collecting data through participant observation and semi-structured interviews. From this data different conceptual categories and the relations between them shape each chapter. Questions are asked of the data and, as a result, new insights and theoretical formulations are drawn about women in the military. This grounded theory approach has also been influenced by wider theoretical perspectives drawing on ideas from both feminist theory and Max Weber.

Feminist social theory is essential in this research because a recurring component throughout all conceptual categories was gender. Gender is a major dimension of social inequality. The origins of many arguments raised by some of the respondents can be traced to gender socialization, an issue that is discussed extensively in this thesis. These stereotypes influence how people view women and their bodies. It is also argued that

gender stereotypes influence how men are viewed and expected to act. The military is a male-dominated institution and as such carries with it certain expectations not only of women, but of men as well. Masculinity is achieved through several means, and is displayed through machismo and bravado about sexual prowess. This male-dominated culture has grave implications for women's integration into the military.

An examination of gender is necessary to understand arguments based on the socially constructed role of women. The thesis has included an extensive investigation of the use of gender stereotypes in an attempt both to refute them and to discredit the social construction of men and women in the military.

A previous interest in Max Weber was rekindled during this study, and it was natural for me to turn to social action theory to gain a better understanding of the material. Weber's theory provides a deeper understanding of the actions of the soldiers and how they are changing their behaviour in the presence of women. Throughout the research, I explained how soldiers rationalize their behaviour, a key word in Weber's writings.

According to Weber's theory of social action, a soldier's behaviour can be rationalized in terms of traditional behaviour affectively determined, rational as an appropriate means to a given end, or rational in an attempt to realise some absolute value. There is a focus on traditional behaviour in this thesis because the military is an institution rooted deeply in its tradition. However, it is argued that soldiers will learn to adopt behaviour accepting women into the military, if their behaviour becomes guided by

instrumental rationalization, according to the new policies of integration and training in gender sensitivity.

Instrumentally rational behaviour is key to women's successful integration in the military. In time, it is hoped that soldiers will see women as a valuable addition to the military and will begin to accept them as equals. Teamwork is paramount for this to occur. Further, this behaviour modification will promote more open social relationships, allowing women the affectual feeling of belonging. Eventually, women will be seen as equal and valuable members of this unit. As these gender relations improve and institutional change takes place, soldiers who are used to saying "sir, yes sir" will be just as comfortable saying, "ma'am, yes ma'am."

The research process has been an exciting journey. I would like to conclude by discussing the application of my work to bring an awareness of current segregating practices, improving training methods and the new harassment policy. Finally, there will be recommendations for further research.

### *7.2 Improvements Required*

Despite difficulties women face, many of them persevere and find their experience in the military positive. Nevertheless, women continue to be seen through a lens of gender stereotyping, and this hinders women's integration. It is the persistence of gender, both male and female, stereotyping that alienates women. Furthermore, the policies put in place for the betterment of the organization, while they have been positive in some

respects, have also had some unintended negative consequences for both men and women.

The history and mandate of the military in combination with its violence and lack of civility results in a pervasive male culture. This male culture creates obstacles women encounter. Many men have negative attitudes toward gender integration, although such attitudes are slowly changing. It is also clear that increasing numbers of male soldiers are welcoming the changes.

One aspect of the institution that alienates women is terminology. Some masculine words have come to refer to both genders. Initially, I, like most women in this study, accepted this. Upon closer investigation, while some words might be thought gender neutral, this is not really the case. Language must be free of gender bias. This should be enforced by all members, on all levels.

None of the respondents knew what the physical fitness requirements were for men or women to enter the military, only that they were different. Some thought women were strong enough for the job, but all conclude that, on average, women are not as strong as men. These claims are frustrating. Evidence has shown that with physical training, women can be as strong as men. Stereotypes evolving from the gender-differential requirements demand that preliminary differences in these requirements must be eradicated. Establishing set physical fitness requirements necessary to enter the military, the same for both genders, is the first step. Then, an establishment of a second set of physical fitness requirements is necessary. Proper training, by qualified fitness instructors,

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for men and women must be available while candidates are on course. This second physical fitness test will require successful completion in order to enter the chosen occupation or MOC.

There is an aura of fear around the issue of women's biological differences. Men's uncomfortable feelings surrounding the issue of women's bodies, for example with regard to menstruation, may be natural and if so, women should be addressing the issue. However, this is not acceptable for those in leadership positions. Leadership must be educated and able to discuss these issues with a high level of competence, not to mention accuracy regarding health and safety for women and men.

Many "good old boys" are still present in the military and hold outdated attitudes. Time may eliminate the attitudes, but with the exception of two males, I did not think that any of the men I interviewed or spoke to informally honestly believe that women do not belong in the military. I think that many men echo the opinions of others, perhaps to gain acceptance, but one-on-one these men did not hold true to the comments made among other men. The opinions of the "good old boys" will slowly leave the system when women, *and men*, speak against them and challenge them and model different behaviours. This will be done primarily by those in leadership positions, but everyone must confront those with outdated beliefs that, for whatever reason, women cannot be successful in the occupation of their choosing. It is only when all members take responsibility that these beliefs will be exterminated.

Throughout the research, many respondents stated that only women who wish to find themselves a man or several men to partake in sexual relations become involved in the military. Surprisingly, while some men believe that women entering the military were promiscuous, many of the women did as well. This was startling. Several women swore to me that many women enroll in the military solely for the men. Interestingly, these same women assure me that they, personally, do not fall into this category. Further, women resent other women who they believe demonstrate irresponsible sexual behaviour. This categorization must stop.

As a researcher, and as a woman, I was surprised and disappointed that the women did not ally themselves against such remarks. Rather, the women were very segmented. Some men were very critical toward women, but many of the women were even more critical. Male bonding is present. Women must also come together and create new boundaries that include rather than exclude them.

When I first started my research I often wondered about sleeping arrangements, thinking men and women could share the same quarters. In my opinion, it is practical for teamwork purposes and also for receiving information. If men and women view each other as soldiers then this arrangement has the potential to work. The data implies that at present, this would not work. The stories shared by the men and women of this study uncover a constant atmosphere of sexual remarks and innuendos that women are subject to. Men and women must respect each other as soldiers, each with a task, each a member of a team.

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Any discussion of sexual assault must be recognized as such and stopped immediately. It must be stopped by not only those who take offense but by anyone who is listening. Not only is such discussion immoral, but the subject discussed is illegal, not mere sex talk, and must be recognized as such.

Strict adherence to fraternization rules must be enforced. Women, as well as men, must take responsibility. If those in leadership roles are responsible for enforcing this notion of teamwork and equality, they undermine each and every lesson if they decide to pursue a personal relationship with someone under their command, or within their chain of command. Good leadership is paramount in the integration process.

Discrimination is deeply rooted and cannot be solved by the simple implementation of policies. The policies do not take into account the vast number of training environments present in the institution that it is trying to change. There is a sound foundation within this harassment policy, however, presently it is only applicable to the office environment. It is not clear how such policies can work in a combat training environment. The harassment policy must be clearly defined with this objective in mind, leaving no room for misinterpretation. Harassment policies are necessary and can help but, unfortunately, they can be abused. This misuse tends to colour the way the policy is viewed and has negative implications for everyone. Strategies must be developed to deal with those who misuse these policies and also for those who resist the changes. Those affected must be involved in all stages of developing the policy. This is empowering to all and will act as a catalyst for the policy to succeed.

Further, the current policy must be closely scrutinized, with a deeper consideration for the gendered order of the institution and the role for those in leadership positions.

Similarly, the policy must be examined for clarity with regards to the interpretation of harassment, and action taken whenever harassment or false accusations of harassment occur. It is clear that the Canadian Forces (CF) have come far in addressing harassment, but it is only when all members, the leaders and troops, realize that women are legitimate members of the military and challenge those who think otherwise, that this male culture be made to change.

Despite gender harassment and stereotyping, all female respondents describe many positive aspects of the military. The majority of women report that they love the feeling of being a part of a team, or being a member of a unit with such ties to the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Throughout the research, I heard many wonderful stories about basic training and friendships made. Above all else, the feeling of accomplishment was evident in each and every soldier. The military is a place that offers challenges, but it is also a family. Women and men can belong to this family. Many of them feel that there is no other place for them but in The Royal Newfoundland Regiment. Here will be those with the courage to challenge, and they will maintain the high standards of the military. The military must value women and establish a comfortable working relationship between men and women. An atmosphere of acceptance can be created if teamwork is emphasized.



### *7.3 Further Research*

Throughout this research, I have shown that women's accounts are complex, often consisting of mixed emotions. Despite the problems women encounter, they report positive experiences. Women are still bonding and becoming part of the team. A further examination of how women are able to bond in this environment, and what rituals they are embracing as they attempt to become a member of the team, are essential.

Further research of the physical requirements for military service is also necessary. If stereotypes result due to gender differentiation it would be beneficial to eradicate preliminary differences in physical fitness requirements. There must be a further investigation on specific physical factors that may be responsible for gender difference in performance, as well as a focus on physical factors that may interfere with this performance. However, consideration must also be given to any abilities that may evolve due to physical differences. In this instance, men and women may be seen as having different positive contributions.

Soldiers from all components of the military must be spoken to, perhaps in focus groups, to identify strengths and weaknesses in the current harassment policy and SHARP training. Through such discussions, policy and diversity training will improve. Non-commissioned members appear to have a vast knowledge of the system, so this should be a target group for input.

The combat arms must be further analyzed to determine whether there are systemic barriers for women, if and when female representation increases. It is necessary,

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then, to monitor trends in enrollment. Attrition rates would be equally important to monitor by gender to determine if there is any difference. Further, a process of debriefing would prove valuable. Debriefing must be done with a specific goal of gaining information on the experiences of women in the forces and why they are leaving.

This thesis has been about bringing together stories of men and women. Both confront hardships throughout the course of their military experience and both experience great rewards. Their stories offer unique insights into this institution and the life of a soldier. Throughout the research each respondent confronts assumptions about women in general and themselves in particular. I end this thesis with a quote from Pamela, because her statement captures how eventually women's integration into The Royal Newfoundland Regiment, and into the Canadian Forces, will succeed:

Everybody isn't going to be able to do everything. It doesn't matter if you are male or female. We are all people, soldiers, and there are some things we can't do. That is why we are there to help each other out. It is not because I am female that I need help. Is it because you're male that you don't need it? Are you too proud to ask for help because you are male? Is it because society has stipulated that you are the one that is going to make it? Excuse me, the big picture is going to show different. Teamwork is one of the things that is going to make this work, if there is no teamwork it will be a sad place.

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MA'AM, YES MA'AM

*Appendix A: Letter to Respondents*

109A Elizabeth Avenue  
St. John's, Newfoundland  
A1B 1R6  
(709) \*\*\*-\*\*\*\*(student)  
(709) \*\*\*-\*\*\*\* (permanent)  
bkitchen@ganymede.cs.mun.ca  
brendakitchen@hotmail.com

day/ month/ 2001

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a student at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am earning my Master of Arts Degree in Sociology. I am required to conduct a research study and write a thesis. I am interested in women's experiences within the Canadian Forces, more specifically within a particular Reserve Unit, The Royal Newfoundland Regiment First and Second Battalion. Therefore, as a current member of this unit, I am requesting your voluntary participation in an interview. Before rejecting or consenting to my request, there are several issues necessary for your consideration.

I am approaching this study primarily as an academic. However, I would like you to know my personal background and interest in this area. Since 1988, I have been member of the Royal Canada Army Cadet Organization. Then, in 1996, I enrolled in the Canadian Forces. More specifically, I am a member of the Cadet Instructors Cadre. However, I wish to assure you that I am conducting this study as a sociology student and not as a military person.

I am under no obligation to provide this report to any persons involved in the Canadian Forces. Further, I am under no obligation and will not inform anybody of your decision to participate or not to participate.

The proposed interview may take up to two hours to complete, depending entirely on you and your responses. If you decide to do the interview, you have the choice of your interview being taped or having me, the researcher, take notes. Further, after the thesis is written, you have direct control over what happens to your transcript and/or tapes from your interview. You may decide to: 1) ask for your cassette tape and/or transcripts back 2) ask me, the researcher, to destroy the tape, and/or 3) ask me, the researcher, to destroy

MA'AM, YES MA'AM

the transcript. In addition, after the interview, with your consent, there may be an additional telephone call placed to address further issues or to clarify data. You will be able to refuse this request without consequence.

I will do my best to keep information confidential. When data is collected, all identifying information will be removed. Your name will not appear in the thesis, and a pseudonym will be used. I will not tell anyone of your decision to participate or not to participate in this study. However, I cannot guarantee strict confidence. This study is one of a small population and perhaps through discussing demographic data or certain situations, some members of the public, after considerable thought, might be able to identify respondents. Also, I am a social researcher bound by ethical responsibilities, but there is chance that I may be bound by legal obligations.

If you decide to participate in this study, you have the option to withdraw at any time, or refuse to answer any particular question without consequence. I will not tell your superiors, peers or subordinates of your decision to participate or not to participate in this study. I would like to restate that I am conducting this study as a sociology student, with absolutely no obligation to the Canadian Forces.

I will be contacting you by telephone to ask if you are willing to participate in this research. You may telephone (if out of area, please call collect), write or email me with any questions you may have. I look forward to speaking with you.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Brenda L. Kitchen

***Appendix B: Interviewee Consent Form***

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in the research project entitled An Exploratory Study of Women's Lived Experiences in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. I acknowledge that my participation in this research project is completely voluntary.

I understand the description the project, including its purpose, methods of research and the risks associated with my participation.

I understand that the findings of the study may be published, and I further understand the level of confidentiality that is offered.

I have been assured that any personal information concerning me that is revealed in connection with this study will be kept in strict confidence except as data unidentified as to source, unless I specifically consent to the release of the information.

I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may decide to stop participating at any time without any consequences to me.

I understand that this study is not attached in anyway to the military organization and the current researcher, Brenda L. Kitchen, is under no obligation to the Canadian Forces.

I understand that the interview will either be recorded or notes taken, according to my consent, and the researcher, Brenda L. Kitchen, will have sole access to those tapes, or notes, for the purpose of transcription. After the thesis has received formal approval, I have direct control over what happens to the transcript and tapes from my interview. I may decide to: 1) ask for my cassette tape, notes, and transcripts back 2) ask for the researcher to destroy the tape and/or 3) ask the researcher to destroy the notes.

I am content with my interview being (please check one):

Taped \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no Notes Taken \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

MA'AM, YES MA'AM

Details of the study have been explained to me by Brenda L. Kitchen and my questions about the study have been answered.

I may obtain additional information about the project and have any questions about the study answered by contacting Dr. Marilyn Porter at telephone number \*\*\*-\*\*\*\* or email address mporter@mun.ca or Dr. Doug House at telephone number \*\*\*-\*\*\*\* or email address dhouse@mun.ca.

I understand that this research is being conducted for a MA thesis and it is not being conducted on behalf of the sociology department or the Department of National Defence.

Signature of Participant \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Researcher \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Appendix C: Questionnaire*

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Date of Birth (e.g. 16 Dec 1976): \_\_\_\_\_
3. Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Where were you born? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Where are you living now? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Are there any members of your family involved in the military? \_\_\_\_\_
9. If so, who and in what capacity? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_
11. What was your education when you first joined the Reserves? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Have you taken any other education since? \_\_\_\_\_
13. When did you first joined the military? \_\_\_\_\_
14. Are you still a member? \_\_\_\_ If no, when did you leave the military?
15. What is your main job within the military? \_\_\_\_\_
16. What is your present rank? \_\_\_\_\_
17. When was your last promotion (if applicable)? \_\_\_\_\_

***Appendix D: Semi-Structured Interview Schedule***

1. Could you tell me why you joined the Reserves?

2. What sorts of training have you done?

- ◆ tell me about it
- ◆ did you enjoy it
- ◆ sleeping quarters
- ◆ challenging

3. Could you tell me about your first day in training?

- ◆ a typical day

4. Could you tell me what's the best thing that happened to you?

5. Could you tell me what's the worst thing that happened to you

6. What do you think are some of the best aspects of working in the military?

7. What do you think are some of the worst aspects of working in the military?

8. How do you feel this far into your military career? Has it meet with your expectations?

9. Would you consider joining the Regular Force?

10. What made you decide to participate in this interview?









